

shrine of Akurwa to the Nyikang of the king in Fashoda. The king is now revered and the effigy is sent back to Akurwa. ⁶⁴³₇₇₅

It is Nyikang, mark you, the symbol of the whole Shilluk people, who is the king-maker. The king-ship belongs to all the people and not to the royal clan. Indeed, I think it significant that when Nyikang captures the king-elect the latter is ostentatiously surrounded by a block of his own clan. In this connection it is to be hoped that more will be learnt about the distribution now and in the past of the royal clan. The traditional home of Nyikang was Fanyikang, a settlement in the south, and the ritual equivalent to the southern half of the kingdom is Gol Nyikang. It seems likely on these, and on other, grounds that the royal clan was at one time found chiefly, perhaps only, in the south and spread from there to those northern settlements in which it is found to-day, as has happened among the closely related Anuak people. Hence in the ceremonies of investiture it seems as though the Shilluk people, represented by Nyikang and the army of the north, capture the king and take him away from his clan, represented by the army of the south, to be the head of the whole nation. The ritual of investiture appears to be an ⁶⁴³₆₄₄₆₁₄ [173] [174] ●

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643 chiefs of the southern settlements follow their
669 representative and the issue is fought out. It

would seem probable that when there is disagreement it is an expression not of divergence of opinion
● 174 about the merits of the candidates but of local

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loyalties in which different members of the royal house are associated with different parts of Shillukland. Whether disputed succession in the past was a product of local rivalries cannot perhaps now be determined, but it seems likely in view of the fact that in earlier times the king ruled from the settlement in which he was brought up or moved from one settlement to another and did not have a fixed residence at the central and neutral point of Fashoda.¹ I would also suggest that the association of princes with settlements and districts is clearly related to the custom by which they are brought up away from the capital. It is probable that the backing given by north and south to candidates for the kingship in past times arose from the fact that some princes were brought up in the north and some in the south. That this is the case is clear

[114] from Father Hofmayr's detailed notes on each of

¹ Seligman, *Report of the Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories*, p. 229, citing information given by Father Banholzer and Dr Lambie; Westermann, *op. cit.* p. 138; Hofmayr, *op. cit.* p. 76.

the Shilluk kings.¹ It is easy to determine because the shrines of dead kings are still maintained to-day where they were born and brought up. I would further suggest that the maternal descent of princes may be of great significance in that it may be the association of maternal lineages with settlements which attaches local loyalties to a particular prince or to a particular branch of the royal house. It is therefore important that the maternal clans of the Shilluk kings should be recorded by some future observer.

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The Shilluk statement that kings should be put to death if they grow old or become sick and their further statement that any prince may at any time challenge the king to mortal combat, in which the king may not call for help, cannot, I think, like the mode of succession, be understood except in relation to the political structure as a whole. There is only traditional evidence that any king has ever been killed in either way but, as Mr Howell and Mr Thomson point out,² the belief that kings have been, or might be, so killed has political implications. The assertion that a sick or old king should be killed probably means that when some disaster falls upon the Shilluk nation the tensions inherent

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[173]
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¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 59-136.

² *Op. cit.* p. 11.

CHAPTER II
THE SHILLUK

131 THE Shilluk country forms a narrow fringe on the west bank of the Nile, from Kaka in the north to within 30 miles of Lake No in the south. From Kodok to Taufikia the Shilluk also occupy the east bank, and their villages extend some 35 miles up the Sobat River, principally on the north bank. Theirs is the flat grass country, dry in the dry season, swampy in the wet, extending on both sides of the Nile; hence cattle are their wealth and principal care, and although a considerable quantity of millet is grown not enough is harvested to provide fully for the relatively dense population, and scarcity is by no means unusual. A census taken in 1903 gave a population of nearly 40,000, possessing over 12,000 head of cattle and nearly 64,000 sheep and goats. No doubt the number of cattle returned was unduly low, but, making all allowances, the Shilluk are poorer in cattle than are the Dinka. The 1903 figure is far below that suggested by Schweinfurth (1,200,000), and at the present time it is likely that the Shilluk number some 100,000.

171 We have stated in Chapter I that in our opinion the homeland of the Shilluk-speaking tribes lay to the east of Lake Victoria. We have no historical record of a northerly movement, all we can say is that a series of migrations gave rise to a number of tribes speaking Shilluk dialects in what is now the Bahr el Ghazal Province, and that from one of these, the Luo, the Shilluk nation of history originated.

174 [119] The researches of the Rev. Father Hofmayr of the Austrian Mission¹ indicate that the Luo—the Shilluk-speaking “Jur”—of the Bahr el Ghazal Province represent the remains of what was once a greater Luo people, from whom are derived the present Shilluk nation, or, more accurately, a certain number of their leading families including that of the king. Here in the neighbourhood of the present Luo country, the land of Dimo of the legends, Nyakang—the leader, culture-hero, and first king of the Shilluk—lived with his half-brother's son, Dimo, until the enmity of the latter drove Nyakang and his followers to seek fresh homes to the east and so brought into existence

¹ Wilhelm Hofmayr, *Die Shilluk. Geschichte, Religion und Leben eines Nilom-Stammes*, Wien, 1925.

174 the Shilluk nation. As Nyakang passed northwards along the river
171 he incorporated the inhabitants; moreover, he had magic, and so
where men were lacking he turned hippopotami and other animals
into human form to become his subjects.¹

174 The Shilluk, though generally tall and long-headed, seem to us
142 to vary more among themselves than any of the riverain tribes of
which we have first-hand knowledge, for while the subject (No. 1)
figured on Pl. III may be taken to represent an average Shilluk
youth (style of head-dress now unfashionable), a long-faced, straight-
nosed and thin-lipped type, as shown in its extreme form in No. 2
is by no means uncommon, as also the handsome if somewhat fierce
type shown in No. 3; there is, too, a rare, exaggeratedly negroid,
type (No. 4), but this can hardly be accepted as truly Shilluk without
prolonged genealogical research. Such wide variation can be best
explained by assuming that Nyakang and his followers represented
a stock carrying more Hamitic blood than the inhabitants of the
riverain villages and other stocks who united with them, and we have
no doubt that so far as the Nilotes are concerned even at the present
day the maximum of Hamitic blood is to be found among the Shilluk,
who, with the exception of the Azande, are the best organized people
in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and who of all the black tribes offered
the most determined opposition to the Khalifa and his followers.

233 The wealth and social position of the Shilluk are estimated in
[556] cattle; sheep and goats are kept, but these are not regarded in the
[462] same, almost sacred, light as cows. Milking is done by boys and old
men, women not being allowed to milk. In every village there is
a number of cattle byres, such as those shown on Pl. V, but except

[173] ¹ A number of Westermann's texts (*The Shilluk People*, Phil., 1912) refer to groups of the
[539] earlier inhabitants absorbed into the Shilluk nation by Nyakang, including turtle-men (op. cit.,
[114] p. 169) and some mysterious river people (pp. xiv, 164-5). One of the first stories that the
inquirer into the wanderings of Nyakang will hear is that of Obog or Obogi, who allowed
himself to be sacrificed in order that Nyakang might pass across a river blocked with
vegetation. The tale, given here in Westermann's version (op. cit., p. 165), constitutes a con-
venient starting-point for inquiries into the route taken by Nyakang:—

"When Nyakang came, he went to the Khor Atulfi, with his followers; he found the
river was shut up by the sudd, so that Nyakang did not find a passage. And a certain man
who was an albino asked thus, 'Nyakang, why do you stop? Is it because you do not
find a passage?' He replied, 'Yes, I do not see a way where to pass.' The man said,
'When I have finished eating, I shall come, I will be killed with a spear, my blood will flow
into the river, and the sudd will break away.' And Nyakang speared the man, his blood
flowed into the river, and the sudd broke away. Thus Nyakang found a passage."

Nothing definite can be said as to the date of Nyakang. Hofmayr (op. cit., 64) thinks that
Ocalo, the fifth king of the genealogy, is the first historic king, and dates his reign 1600-35.
Presumably this is reached by reckoning backwards; it is a reasonable estimate, giving an
average reign of about 13 years, and allowing thirty to a generation.

I DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE.

- 101 NAME The inhabitants are called: *śśśśś*, "a Shilluk", plural *śśśśś*, "children of Shilluk", "Shilluks"; the country is called *śśśśś* "country of the Shilluks." The word *śśśśś* perhaps means "black", vide below. A second name of the people is *śśśśś*, "descendants of *śśśśś*," this name is connected with Nyikang, the national hero of the Shilluks. The name "Shilluk" (singular Shillawi) is given to them by the Arabs, and has now become their common designation; it is of course derived from *śśśśś*. Other appellations, which are in use among the neighbours of the Shilluks, vide page 44.

- 131 EXTENSION OF THE COUNTRY The Shilluk country is situated on the western banks of the White Nile, from Kaka to Lake No, that is from about $10^{\circ}5'$ to $9^{\circ}5'$ northern latitude, a length of nearly 350 km, and a width of 5 to 6 hours. Near the mouth of the Sobat (Bahr El Azzaf, "Yellow River") a number of Shilluks live on the eastern shore of the White Nile, on both sides of the lower Sobat, chiefly on its northern bank. They extend about 35 miles up the Sobat, the last Shilluk village up river being Nagdyeb. There is also a group of Shilluk settlements at Shakwa El Shillawi (= Shilluk), near Bahr El Azzaf, on the right bank of the Nile, and on Khor Atar, south of Tonga (Tug). North of Kaka the first Shilluk settlements are found on Aba Island, on the north- and south-end of which there is a small Shilluk village each. Near Maaran Island there is also a Shilluk village on the right bank of the Nile. Again single settlements are met with on Maaran Island, Wad Dakana Island, and on the north-end of the Gaira Wad Belker.

- 103 The Shilluks themselves designate the extension of their country by naming the most northern and the most southern village and district of their Kingdom, viz. Kwame and Tonga (*Mugag, Tug*), which term corresponds exactly to the expression of the ancient Hebrews: from Dan unto Borsabab.

- 131 In former times the country of the Shilluks seems to have been larger than it is now. According to older reports it not only extended further northwards, whence they were driven back by Arab tribes, but they are also said to have, in the 17th century, inhabited both sides of the White Nile south of Kawa; Kawa is situated a little south of El Duim; so, provided this report is right, they owned at that time a tract of territory nearly three times as great as that they inhabit to-day.

- 132 CLIMATE From January to April the climate of the country is dry and warm. April is

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Introduction

and everything he possessed became the property of the king.

DIVISION OF
THE COUNTRY

The country is divided into 63 districts (vide page 127), every one of which is presided by a district chief; each village again has its own chief. The district and village chiefs are appointed and may be deposed by the king. Quarrels and law-suits may be judged by the local or district chief, but an appeal to the king is always possible. Common affairs of a village and minor judicial cases are judged by the local chief together with the old men of the village. They sit on such occasions in a circle in the village yard, in the shade of a tree, if there is one. If the meeting is secret, or if the weather is bad, they assemble in the cow-house.

VI. ETHNICAL COMPONENTS OF THE SHILLUK PEOPLE.

EARLY
INHABITANTS
OF THE
COUNTRY

When Nyikang arrived in what is now the Shilluk country, the latter was inhabited by other tribes, who probably were partly of dark, and partly of fair colour. These inhabitants were either expelled or subdued and then incorporated into the Shilluk nation. This process is clearly reflected in the traditions. Among others Nyikang found the "red strangers" in the country, which he either defeated and made them tributary, or drove out of their residences (vide page 163 ff.). These "red strangers" seem to be Arabs. But apart from them the traditions speak of fabulous beings who were partly man and partly animal; Nyikang fought with them, and when defeated, transformed them into real men and settled them in villages. They are probably the original negro inhabitants of the present Shilluk country, who up to this day form the essential part of the Shilluk people, a discrimination being made between them and the "people of Nyikang."

SOCIAL
ORGANISATION

The latter form, so to say, a nobility. The first in rank is the royal family and all members of it, that is all persons who can claim descendancy from Nyikang. The male members of the royal family bear the title *Kwa riq* "descendant of the king", and are shown special deference. In several of the historical traditions the king or the royal family expressly distinguish themselves from the common Shilluks; in these connections the name "Shilluk" is even used in an abusive way: "merely a Shilluk", vide page 233. Probably the name of the Shilluks *chik* means "black"; in some nearly related languages the word has this meaning. This makes it probable that Nyikang and his people, or, the members of the royal family, were originally of lighter colour, as only this would give them a reason for calling the population they found inhabiting the country, "blacks".

Ethnical Components

XLIX

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174 So the coming of Nyikang into the Shilluk country would in fact mean an immigration of light-coloured people into a region already inhabited by black tribes. — Probably the word *Okäng*, which, as is shown on page XLI, is connected with *Nikäng*, and means a descendant of *Käng*, also designates only or mainly members of the royal family, and not the common Shilluks; on the Sobat the word is rarely used; but it is well known at Fashoda, the seat of the royal court.

563 There live among the Shilluks a number of "Nubians", called by them *Dya*; the word is derived from Dongola, and designates the Nubians (and perhaps other tribes) living west of the White Nile. These Nubians came into the country as captives, during wars, others came as fugitives. They are exceptionally numerous in Faina, a sub-district of Nyagir; they are known here as good cultivators of dura. Originally these were driven into this district by the Khalifa's people, and inhabit five villages, consisting of 104 domiciles; they are subject to the Shilluk chief of the district. — The Nubians play a certain rôle in the election of the king, vide page 122 ff. They bear the title *Nadwai*.

RELATIONS
WITH THE
NUBIANS

648 The Shilluks do not, as a rule, agree well with the Dinkas, their northern and eastern neighbours. The Dinka possesses more cattle than the Shilluk, and therefore looks down on the latter rather contemptuously. The Dinkas are said to have formerly lived on the right bank of the lower Sobat, but were driven inland by the Shilluks. Incited by Arabs, the Shilluks in former times frequently raided the Dinkas and carried away their women and cattle. They however live peaceably now, thanks to the fear they have of the new Government. The two tribes now and then pay mutual visits and also intermarry occasionally; a certain amount of trade is carried on between them.

RELATIONS
WITH THE
DINKAS

There are a few Selim Baggara in the neighbourhood of Kaka, but these people appear to visit the district only after the harvest to purchase dura from the Shilluks, which they are too indolent to cultivate themselves. The Kenana Arabs occupy the wells at Atara. They are disliked by the Shilluks on account of their dirty habits. Another branch of the Kenana Arabs inhabit a village close to Fadiang (*Fa dani* "village of cattle").

RELATIONS
WITH THE
ARABS

VII. MIGRATIONS AND HISTORY.

174 South of the Shilluk country there live, under different names, a number of tribes who likewise speak the Shilluk language (vide page 30 ff.), and who, in their physique, show strong resemblances to, and in some cases identity with, the Shilluks of the White Nile. It must be supposed that originally all these tribes lived in one place. Some of them still have traditions pointing to a common

ORIGINAL
SEATS OF THE
SHILLUKS, AND
WANDERINGS

L

Introduction

174 origin and a common home. The southern mass of the Shilluk speaking people, the Gang, pretend to have come from north (vide Schweitzer, Emin Pascha; Berlin 1898, page 155), and, as will be seen below, the White Nile Shilluks have migrated into their present seats from south; so the original habitat of the whole people will have been in the country situated about the middle of their present seats, that is, along the shores of Bahr el Jebel. Here one division of the Shilluks, the Beri (*Beri*, also written *Beir*), are still living. The rest of the Shilluks were forced to emigration probably by the arrival of more powerful and warlike tribes coming from east, viz. the Bari and Latuka, who up to the present time inhabit this country. The Shilluks, being thus expelled from their seats, emigrated in three directions: south, north-east, and north-west. The division wandering southwards are now known as Gang or Acholi, Shuli (on the identity of the names Acholi, Shuli, and *Chōlō* vide page 31); the north-eastern branch are the Anywaks (*Anuaks*). These two branches, viz. the Gang and the Anywak, have practically almost no differences in their dialect; they may be said to speak the same dialect, which differs from the rest of Shilluk dialects by the relative primitiveness of its sounds; to give one example, they have generally preserved *ch* and *p*, where other dialects have adopted the younger corresponding sounds *sh* and *f*. So these two may be regarded as direct branches of the original stock, who both must have branched off about the same time. That Gang and Anywak have been separated from the north-western section at an earlier period than that in which the latter was again divided into different sub-groups (vide below), is evident from the fact that all these north-western sub-groups still know of their common origin, whereas I have never met with a tradition pointing to relationship with the Anywaks and Gang.

The Anywaks have again been divided into three sections, whose residences vide page 30. From the Gang a number of smaller divisions have branched off into south-west, south and south-east: the Lur, (*Aluru*), *Jafalu* (*Jafalug*, *Japalug*), Lango, *Ja-Lug* (*Nyifwa Kavirendo*), Wagaya.

The third division first wandered north-westward, crossing the Bahr el Jebel, and subsequently probably resided in a place situated about the 10° eastern long. and 7° northern lat. That they have settled and lived in this region for a considerable time, is practically proved by the fact that on older maps a number of villages are situated here whose names begin in *Pa*, *Fa*; e. g. *Fatil* in the Dinka district *Rōl*; *Fayot*, *Fawer*, *Fayak*, in the Dinka district *Kich*, and *Fagak*, in the Dinka district *Tw* (*Twich*). *Pa*, *Fa* is a word of the Shilluk language meaning village, home (Many villages in the Shilluk country have this same prefix *pa*, *fa*, vide 80; it is also frequent in the Jur country: *Famir*, *Fabuchak*,

Migrations and History

L1

Fashion, and in the Acholi country: Fanyikuara, Fandikir, Faggeir, Fadjulli, Fadibek (from Schweitzer, Emin Pascha). This district is now inhabited by Dinkas, and their occupation of the country no doubt forced the Shilluks to emigrate once more. From here they went in north-eastern direction and thus came into their present seats on the White Nile and Sobat. *These last wanderings were carried on under the leadership of Nyikang*; they form the object of the traditions on pages 158 ff. Another part of this north-western section went westwards and formed the Ber (= Beri, vide 87) and Belanda or rather Bgr, vide page 44. The third part of this branch are the Jurs and the Dembos. Jur is a nickname given to the people by the Dinkas, it means "uncivilised tribe", "bushman". They call themselves *Lug*, a name which occurs again among several southern Shilluk tribes, vide 89; by the Bongos they are called Ber (vide above), thus showing in their very names the near relationship they have with other Shilluk divisions. — The Jurs have no cattle, they are renowned as iron smelters.

According to Schweinfurth (page 63) the Jurs themselves say that they are a part of the Shilluk people who (on account of over-population) emigrated from north (i. e. The White Nile region) into their present habitat, and that they call the name of their ancestor Oshuola = *Ochölq*. But on the other hand, Hofmeyer states that the White Nile Shilluks call the Jurs *Oding*, that is descendants of *Dimg*. Now *Dimg* is a brother of Nyikang, whom the latter left. All the Shilluk traditions are unique in the assertion that Nyikang did not go northwards together with Dimg. So this would mean that the Jurs never wandered into the White Nile country, but went their way directly westward into their present seats.

[The suggestion on the migration of the north-western section, viz. that of the White Nile Shilluks, Jurs, Dembos, Belandas and Bers, as it has been outlined above, is in a remarkable way supported by traditions of the White Nile Shilluks, which Hofmeyer gives; according to these the origin of the nation was in the far east (i. e. east of the Bahr el Jebel). Nyikang led his people from the east towards north-west. After a long march they crossed the Nile (i. e. the Bahr el Jebel) and came into that region which is now called Bahr el Ghazal. From here the Belanda went westwards, the rest, after some time, travelling farther northwards.]

While nothing is known concerning the time of the earlier Shilluk migrations, we are able to fix the approximate date of the wanderings which resulted in the final settlement of the "Proper Shilluks" on the White Nile and Sobat. Mr. B. Struck, by taking into consideration all the available (written or unwritten) chronicles of African dynasties, has made a calculation on the average duration

THE RULING
ELEMENT
AMONG THE
SHILLUKS

174 of the reign of an African ruler. The number of years thus reached at is between 13 and 14 for each king. Now from the reign of Nyikang, who was the first Shilluk king, till to-day the Shilluks have had 28 to 30 kings; 29 multiplied with 13½ leads back to the first quarter of the sixteenth century. About this time, then, the Shilluk kingdom was founded, or, in other words, during this period a probably fair-skinned tribe or clan became in some manner united with the Shilluks, and made itself the ruling factor among the latter. The first of these leaders and rulers was Nyikang, or possibly Nyikang is only a personification — the heros eponymos — of the foreign element in the Shilluk population. From those early days up to the present never a "Shilluk", i. e. a member of the original population, has been king, solely the "descendants of Nyikang" forming the royal family, from which the king is elected. Even to-day the descendants of Nyikang do not intermarry with the "Shilluks", they live in districts and villages of their own and enjoy certain privileges, thus forming the aristocracy of the nation. Second in rank are those Shilluks which migrated into the country together with Nyikang as his "followers" or "servants." They also possess several social privileges and state functions. The lowest class of Shilluks are the natives found in the country, when Nyikang and his adherents arrived. They may be designated as the "common people", the "subjects" in the state community. The second and third categories, and also the first, have no doubt been mixed by intermarriage. From the earlier centuries of the Shilluk dynasty but scanty historical data are known. The only reports we have are the list of kings (vide page 135), and a considerable store of traditions, dealing with prominent acts of single kings and important events which occurred during their reign. Some of these native records are printed on pages 141 ff.

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RELATIONS
WITH THE
FUNJ

The first time the Shilluks enter history is about the beginning of the sixteenth century, that is at the same time when they took possession of their present seats. Beginning at this period they have, during almost two centuries, played an essential part in the history of the Funj people. The question of the origin of the Funj is as yet unsettled. In order to introduce the reader into the problem, I shall give a short survey of this remarkable people and their history.

The most common form of the name is Funj or Fonj, and Fung. Funj is in phonetic writing probably *Fos*, ending in a palatal n, and Fung = *Fui*, ending in a velar n. Of these two forms I suppose Fonj = *Fos* to be the older one. Foreigners who are not used to a palatal n standing at the end of a word, find its pronunciation difficult, and frequently substitute s for n, a mispronunciation which I myself have often heard in the Sudan. This Funj, Fonj is probably identical with the Shilluk word *bwot* "stranger"; in Shilluk as well as in Nubian b and f are interchanged; in Nuer the word for "stranger" sounds *fos*, and in

Migrations and History

LIII

the Funj language the word "bunj" means "Arab", i. e. stranger; the identity of this bunj with Shilluk bonj, Nuer fonj and the name Funj can hardly be doubted. Now Bruce gives the singular of the name by "fungo", and the plural "fungi". This is a pure Shilluk form; *g* being in Shilluk the ending of the noun in singular, and *i* that of the plural. The meaning of the word "fungo" Bruce renders by "free citizen". (R. Hartmann [Die Nigritier] identifies the word Funj with the Ptoemphanae of the ancients, and moreover compares it with a great number of African names of similar sounding; but his deductions have not convinced me.)

The present Funj are a negro people living in Sennar. Their colour is dark, but somewhat lighter than that of the Shilluks; they are of a strong, tall figure, with thin legs. Both sexes wear most artful hair dresses. They have leather shields in form almost like those of the Shilluks; their fighting arms are swords and missiles. The huts of the Funj consist in round walls with conical roofs. Their chief occupation is agriculture, but they have also some cattle. They are clever in smelting and working iron and other metals.

Their religion is Islam, but the older records are unique in stating that at the end of the 15th century they were heathens, and even when Bruce was in the country, many pagan practices had survived; it almost seems that at that time the people still were in their hearts rather pagans than true followers of Islam, though the latter had long before become the official religion.

The Funj country, Dar Fung, stretches on both sides of the Blue Nile. Its present boundaries are: on the north, Jebels Gereiwa and Rera; on the east, Jebel Agadi and the Fazogli district. Southwards, it extends to the Abyssinian frontier, and including the district of Keili and the northern Burun country, extends westwards towards the Dinkas of the White Nile. In the days when the Fung were a great power of the Sudan, their country included parts of Abyssinia, and large districts west of the White Nile.

About the beginning of the 16th century the Funj appear in history. At this time they founded the kingdom of Sennar, which, from then till about the end of the 18th century, was governed by a Funj dynasty.

Since the early days of their history the Funj must have lived in some connection with the Shilluks. This fact is stated by all travellers and explorers who have been in the country and have written on the subject. Sir James Bruce, a distinguished English traveller and writer, who visited Sennar in 1770, asserts the identity of the Shilluks and Funj. In his Travels into Abyssinia he says that in 1504 a hitherto unknown negro nation, which had till then inhabited the western shores of the Bahr el Abiad about the 13° northern lat., landed in canoes in the Arab provinces of the Gezira; they defeated Wed Ageeb, the

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174 king of Sennar, and forced a treaty upon him by which the kingdom of Sennar
 101 became subject to the Funj, who subsequently took possession of the whole
 Gesira. "This negro nation is in their own country called Shillook".¹ In 1504
 Amru, the son of Adelan, who was the first of their regents, founded his mo-
 narchy on the eastern shores of the Blue Nile, and built Sennar, which ever
 since has been the capital. "From this period until the time of my sojourn
 (1770) 266 years had passed, during which twenty kings had reigned".² When
 the monarchy was founded, *the king and the whole nation of the Shillook were*
pagans. Soon after they accepted Mohammedanism, and took the name Fungi,
 which they sometimes translate by "lord" or "victor", and sometimes by "free
 citizen" . . . but this term should be applied to those born east of the Bahr el
 Abiad only".

114 So the essence of James' report is this: The Funj are a portion of the
 Shilluk people, which, in the beginning of the 16th century, crossed the White
 Nile, conquered Sennar, founded a kingdom there, and henceforth were called and
 called themselves Funj. The source from which Bruce got this information, was
 the executioner of the royal court, whose chief office it was to put the king to
 death, as soon as in the opinion of the state ministers he was, from old age
 or on account of his misdoings, no more apt to govern the country. This same
 practice has been in use with the Shilluks up to the nearest past, with the sole
 difference that the Shilluk kings were strangled by their chief wife, not by an
 official. Bruce, having cured the executioner from a severe disease, gained the
 full confidence of this important person, who no doubt was well acquainted
 with the history of his people. Bruce also mentions the presence of Nubian
 (heathen) priests at the court of Sennar, who were, according to the executioner's
 statement, "great conjurers and sorcerers". From these Nubians Bruce heard
 of the "large mountains Tegla and Dyre" (= Jebel Tagale and Jebel Eliri in
 south-eastern Kordofan), from which their, the Nubians', forefathers had come
 into this country a long time ago, after they had been escaped there from a
 great flood.

According to the report given in The A. E. S. the rise of the kingdom of
 Sennar began in 1493. In that year Amara Dunkas (= Amru of Bruce?), the
 Sheikh of a sub-section of the Fung, either through the fortune of war or his
 superior capacity, succeeded in getting himself declared king of all the Fung
 tribes. These districts were inhabited by negroes belonging to the Nuba tribes,
 some of whom after the conquest remained in the country, while others emi-
 grated into the mountains of Fazogli and Kordofan. Those who remained, em-
 braced Islamism, intermarried with their conquerors, and, losing their language
 and nationality, were soon lost in the tribes known collectively under the name

¹ Bruce has never been in the Shilluk country, and had probably never before heard the name
 "Shilluk", he can only have learned it in Sennar from the natives.

² Thus the average reign of each king was a little more than thirteen years! vide above.

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of Fung. King Baadi Abu Dign, who reigned from 1635—1671, attacked the Shilluk negroes and took a large number of slaves. The Shilluks at that time inhabited the country on both sides of the White Nile south of Kawa. Thence he invaded the mountains of Tagale and destroyed Kordofan, where he again took a large number of slaves. On his return to Sennar he built a number of villages in that district for his prisoners. The prisoners named these villages after those they had left, hence the number of villages now near Sennar with names similar to those in Jebel Nuba, Tagale, and other districts about Kordofan. In time these slaves supplied the kings of Fung with recruits for their armies. — In 1719 a king whose name was *Gaadi Abu Shilluk* ascended the throne.

In the first half of the 18th century the Fungs drove the Darfurians back, which had at that time dominion over the country east of the White Nile as far as the Athara; the Fungs then again established their own authority on the banks of the White Nile. In 1770 they even wrested the province of Kordofan from the Darfur kings, but it was retaken by the latter five years later. This was about the time when the Dinkas emigrated from the Bahr el Ghazal and took possession of the right bank of the White Nile, under their great chief Akwai Chakab; by them the Fungs were expelled from the eastern shores of the White Nile into the Blue Nile region.

According to Cailliand, a French writer, who was in Sennar about 1820, the "Foungi" came from the Sudan, crossed the White Nile and arrived at "Arbaguy" (= Herbagi of Bruce); here a great battle was delivered, in which the Funj were victorious, so that they became lords of the country; "they gave their name to a part of the Sennar kingdom in the Bouroum (= Burun) country, called also Jebel Fungi, where the soldiers of the mek live".

R. Hartmann, who visited the country in 1859/60, is of the opinion that the original home of the Funj is in Sennar. "They recruited their (black) soldiers from their military colonies, which were situated at the foot of the Sennar hills, and from Kordofan Nubas." "Between 1499 and 1530 the christian state of Aloa (Alwa) succumbed under the invasion of the Funj, who broke forth from the south of Sennar, and whose military forces consisted partly of Shilluks." "The Shilluks are relatives of the Funj, whose intimate allies they were during the conquest of Sennar in the 16th century."

Cailliand and the A. E. S. as well as Bruce give a list of the Funj kings, which, though differing in several items, is on the whole consistent. Bruce fixes the beginning of the dynasty in the year 1504, Cailliand in 1484, and A. E. S. in 1493.

Leaving the question of the provenience of the Funj alone, the following can

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be regarded as sure: 1. The kingdom of Funj was founded in the beginning of the 16th, or at the end of the 15th century. 2. the political influence of the Funj extended at times westward beyond the White Nile, as far as Darfur and Kordofan; consequently the Shilluks must also have been under the dominion of the Funj, as their country is situated on the way to Kordofan. 3. All writers confirm that the Funj have repeatedly transplanted great numbers of Shilluk and Kordofan prisoners into the Funj country, where they were settled, formed large colonies of their own, and finally submerged in the "Funj" nation. It was these large numbers of new settlers who formed the bulk of the Funj armies and enabled them to carry on their great conquests. 4. But it is not at all improbable that portions of the Shilluk people should have emigrated into Sennar of their own will; the coincidence of the arrival of the Shilluks in the White Nile region and the foundation of the Funj kingdom is remarkable; both events took place about the beginning of the 16th century; at that time the Shilluks inhabited both shores of the White Nile as far north as Kawa; consequently they lived in close contact with the people of Sennar, and it seems not unlikely that parts of them should have pushed forward into Sennar, the more so as they had only just arrived in the country and were not yet finally settled; such an emigration would also explain their now being limited to a relatively small district compared with the former much larger size of the Shilluk country. 5. The Shilluks themselves tell in their traditions of repeated and severe fights against the people of Sennar; they call the place where these wars were fought, Chai, and say it is close to Roseires on the Blue Nile, that is east of Jebel Gule, where the old capital of the Funj was situated. 6. Cailliaud in his book "Voyage à Méroé", names 50 villages beginning in *Fa*, in the Bertat and Fasseq country on both sides of the Blue Nile; as shown above, *Fa* is the characteristic prefix of Shilluk villages, being an abbreviation of *fa*, *pa* "village". It seems evident that these villages are originally settlements of the Shilluks who emigrated into these regions. 7. The Shilluks living in Sennar called the aboriginal inhabitants "*bwoa* or *fuoa*" (= *Fenj*, *Funj*) that is "strangers", just as to-day they call every one who is not a Shilluk: *bwoa* (= *bwooy*), and finally this became the name of the "Funj nation". 8. It is possible that this Shilluk population in Sennar came to political influence and took part in the government of the state. This becomes even highly probable by a very curious remark of Bruce; where he translates the name *Fungi* by "free citizens" he continues: "Methinks they should not boast of the title 'free citizen', because the first name of nobility in this country is that of 'slave', indeed they have no other title except this. If a man in Sennar feels himself not sufficiently respected, he will ask at once: Do you not know who I am? Do you not know I am a

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101 slave? Connecting with this word the same notion of pride, as one in England would say: 'Do you not know I am a peer of the kingdom?' All titles and offices are not respected, if they are not in the hands of a man who is a slave. Slavery is in Sennar the only true nobility*. This subversion of social ranks becomes intelligible, if we assume a state of facts as suggested above, viz. that the Shilluks, and perhaps also, in a limited number, the Nubians, who lived in the country as a kind of military caste and still were designated as slaves, had in fact become the ruling race. They may even at times have possessed the throne, as the name of one of the Funj kings indicates: Gaadi Abu Shilluk. — Thus we understand also the report of the executioner from whom Bruce got his information: he was a descendant of the Shilluk immigrants, and considering the position the latter held at that time, he was not wrong in saying the Funj were originally Shilluks. The same is to be said of the Nubian priests, who claimed for their home the region of the Eliri mountains. 9. The present language of the Funj, of which Marno gives some 150 words, is not identical with the Shilluk language, but it shows unmistakable signs of a connection with the latter, a number of words being common to both, notably

Funj.	Shilluk.
<i>bunj</i> Arab	<i>bwen</i> stranger, Arab
<i>ibibia</i> ant	<i>it</i> white ant
<i>kamas</i> to eat	<i>chamg</i> to eat
<i>nen</i> hippo	<i>nen</i> crocodile
<i>lei</i> giraffe	<i>lei</i> game
<i>jok</i> God	<i>jogk</i> God
<i>lgis</i> star	<i>kyig</i> star
<i>mine</i> dumb	<i>mjs</i> dumb
<i>kaj an</i> to-day	<i>kack an</i> this time
<i>ko-song</i> spear	<i>tsi</i> spear
<i>luas</i> stick	<i>lef, loj</i> stick, club.

Thus out of a number of about 150 Funj words given by Marno 11 are Shilluk words; and, what is remarkable, these eleven words the Funj has not in common with its neighbouring languages Tabi and Bertat, they can therefore not be borrowed from these languages.

175 In 1786 the kingdom of the Funj totally disappeared. King Adlan was deposed by the Hameg (Hamej), a tribe living south of Roseires. Anarchy prevailed throughout the country, and the kings succeeded each other in such rapid succession that in the year 1788 four kings successively reigned. During the succeeding 33 years of anarchy the Hameg continued supreme, and under Sheikh Nasser they devastated the northern and eastern part of the Sudan with

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The racial difference may be fully understood and explained by Shilluk mythology. Nyikang, the deified and the Shilluk culture hero, came, with his followers, to the southern part of present Shillukland and erected his headquarters at Nyilual, in Panyang district. When he proceeded northward to extend his boundary and to found his kingdom, he found the lands on either side of the Nile already inhabited. The aboriginal people are said to have been Nuba and Fung, or according to one authority (9) Dongolawys or Barabra. It seems to me that the Fungs were not really the inhabitants of the land, but more reasonably they were subduing the country, especially the part of it which lies on the right bank of the Nile. At any rate, Nyikang conquered the present Shillukland in a peaceful way sometimes, and by means of force in in those instances where people showed resistance. The people either fled to the Nuba mountains and Sennar, or stayed in the land. Those who stayed were not reduced to slaves, but were accepted as Shilluk citizens and thus incorporated into the Shilluk nation.

Now the high cephalic index in the north may be attributed to a Nuba influence, more specifically to an eastern Nuba influence, or to a mesocephalic influence from the Dar Fung Hills.

There is no other nearby area of mesocephals than the eastern Nuba Hills. The next nearest area of mesocephals is the Dar Fung mountains which lie within a range of between 200 to 400 kilometers northeast of the Shilluk land across the Nile. Here first are some anthropometric measurements from both mesocephalic areas:

Nuba Hills: (10)	C.I.	M.I.	F.I.	U.F.I.	S.(cm)
Togole (7)	79	103	76.5	44.5	
Ilyry & Lafafa (32)	76.42	92.26	82.26	46.19	173.82
Lokon (8)	78.68	95.63			
Tira-ol Akhdar, Mendi, Mandroon					
Khoun (7)	77.75	92.37	82.42	45.55	169.8
Naba wacen (11)	76.30	94.03	83.48	48.23	157.2
Ilyry (10)	75.15	94.4			
<u>Dar Fung Hills: (11)</u>					
Fung (5)	74.6	83.3	84.9	46.5	170
Ingassana (12)	73.1	90.4	82.8	44.3	173
Khona (7)	73.4	96.3	82.0	45.9	
Udak (9)	77.4	97.0	77.9	43.7	167
Barun (30)	73.2	101.5	83.1	44.4	170
Jun Jun (17)	75.5				
Aoban (43)	79.1	96.0	84.0	47.0	176

Hypothetically we can say that these two areas in the past formed a mesocephalic belt, now separated through the migration of the dolicephalic Dinka of the White Nile, on the eastern bank, and the Shilluk and Baggara Arabs on the western bank of the Nile.

Both areas, within themselves, do not form racial unities, but are more or less refuge areas. Thus they are merely conglomerations of different physical and cultural types which have fled from the plains in front of any conquest. But the most important feature that combines them (not politically, but from our scientific standpoint) is their mesocephalic character.

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144 Now it is impossible to suggest that all people fled to the hills because of an instance of superior invasion; some will naturally stay in their land and will incorporate with the newcomers. At first they may well form a caste, they may also be reduced to slavery, but through the factor of time intermarriage will occur, and the conquerors and conquered will fuse into a harmonious unit. This process depends upon the policy followed by the conquerors; it will be allowed to develop if the conquerors accept the aborigines in the frame of their society. The negative picture will result if the invaders insist upon wholly exterminating the aborigines. Many factors define the policy of the invaders, but the most important is the numerical factor. If it is a big migrational wave, then there is no question of peaceful incorporation and amalgamation, and if they form a minor wandering wave, they will be keen on the amalgamation policy. The latter case was that which we can deduce from the Shilluk legend. They were so keen upon populating the country that they tell us that Nyikang, through his supernatural powers and the help of Dak, his son, caught mysterious people from the river, and changed animals into men to make them their subjects and to incorporate them into their nation.

If this was the case, then we should be able to say that the present Shillukland, before the coming of the Shilluk of Nyikang, was populated by at least a mesocephalic group in the north and a dolichocephalic group in the south, culturally and perhaps politically separate. The long-headed group may be the racial substratum of the whole area of the Kilotes of the Sudan.

- 141 3. The further heterogeneity of the Shilluk, which table "D" reveals, is quite understandable. The Shilluk legends and myths tell us that the founder of the nation and his followers came from a far country near "Ben Doun" which means a broad and big river, a lake, a salt sea or a lake shore.

The physical qualities of the royal family members, as shown in table "D", do not give any clue to the real origin of this migration, because these qualities are shared by most of the inhabitants of the bigger area around the Shillukland. Long-headedness is nearly universal in Africa. The tendency to broadness is rare and may be attributed to Armenian (Alpine) influence in the northern half of the continent and to Pigmy influence in the central parts. From other evidences such as their legends and the legends of other Shilluk-speaking tribes, as well as other circumstantial evidences we can speculate on the original home of the Shilluk. Many theories have been introduced to account for the origin of the Shilluk, but here is not the right place to discuss this controversial problem.

4. In table "E" we see further disharmony. The tendency to a higher cephalic index is readily explained if we understand the Shilluk social institutions. The kings marry commoners according to the law of exogamy which is prevalent among the Shilluk. Later on, when the wives of the king are pregnant, they are sent to their villages to give birth. The royal babies are never born in Pashoda, and they stay in the village of their birth under the protection and guidance of the village chief.

We can conclude that the racial heterogeneity of the Shilluk is not simple. Three factors play a role in the ethnic composition of this nation and like many other nations, these different elements are fused into a social and cultural unit.

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OF FUNG AND SHILLUK

Mohamed Riad

12) Any one who deals with either the Fung or the Shilluk,
114 historians as well as anthropologists, must say a word about the
possible relationship between the two kingdoms. Many pages have
been written on this subject by well known writers, but the lack
of a good comparative study that would envisage the whole problem
in its various aspects is noted in some of these works. Others
were motivated by "a prioristic" conceptions, or one-sidedness,
or depended entirely upon certain points, or "... fever for verbal
similarities". 1)

The last word in the controversy has not yet been said,
and most probably will not be said. I do not contend that this
paper will put an end to the controversies, but I think that by
taking into consideration the historical as well as the anthro-
pological points of view, we can reach a safe stage at which we
can build our own point towards this complicated subject.

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4) The PROBLEM :

114 The story begins in 1790, the year James Bruce of
175 Kinnaird -an English traveller- published a voluminous work
describing his journey to discover the sources of the Nile,
which took place between 1768 and 1773. In 1772 Bruce was in
Sennar, the capital of the Fung Kingdom, which was the most
important and the most powerful state of the Eastern Sudan in
the Middle-Ages. In this city Bruce got a glimpse of history of
Kingdoms and tribal movements in this part of Africa. Bruce
transmits to us what he heard (and maybe what he imagined) 2)
in such a statement:

174 "In the year 1804, a black nation, hitherto unknown,
inhabiting the western banks of the Bahr el Abiad
(White Nile) in about latitude 13, made a descent
in a multitude of canoes or boats upon the Arab
provinces This race of negroes is in their
own country called Shilluk At the establishing
of this monarchy the king and the whole nation of

1) Arkell was so described by Chataway, p.117

2) It is agreed upon that Bruce always imagined many things,
and in his writings pictured himself as a hero who escaped
dangers through his bravery etc. ... Read a short description
of Bruce's character in Crawford, pp. 253-254

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"Shilluks were pagans. They were seen afterwards converted to Islam for the sake of trading with Cairo and took the name of Fung, which they interpret sometimes lords or conquerors, and at other times free citizens". 3)

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In another statement Bruce hits upon an important aspect of the inner organization of the state:

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"It is one of the singularities which obtains among this brutish people, that the king ascends his throne under the admission that he may be lawfully put to death by his own subjects or slaves upon a council being held by the great officers, if they decree that it is not for the advantage of the State that he be suffered to reign any longer. There is one officer of his own family who alone can be the instrument of shedding his sovereign and his own blood. This officer is called Sid el Coom, master of the king's household or servants, but has no vote in deposing him; nor is any guilt imputed to him however many of his sovereigns he thus murdered. Achmet Sid el Coom, the present regicide, and resident in Iemain's palace seemed, by a strange accident, to be one of the gentlest spirits of any at Sennar. His place of birth was a village of Fasugle, and it appeared to me that he was still a pagan". 4)

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That was the first time the world ever heard of the name Shilluk, and thus was the beginning of the problem, which is now more than one and a half centuries old. Many authors have supported this opinion of the Shilluk origin of the Fung kingdom, and many as well objected, producing speculations and theories. Others changed their opinions on second thoughts, and until now new handling of the subject and the introduction of new ideas concerning this tangible problem are still forthcoming; but we can summarise these controversies into three major lines:

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- 1) The Shilluk origin of the Fung. 5)
- 2) The Arab origin of the Fung - or generally the Eastern origin. 6)
- 3) The Western origin of the Fung, i.e. Darfur or other western Islamic empires of the vast Sudan. 7)

What concerns us in this paper is the first item; that is, broadly speaking, the relations between the Fungs and the Shilluk, while the origin of the Fung themselves is more or less a historical subject.

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- 8) Soligman, p. 424. (As there is in Vienna but a French translation of Bruce, I preferred to quote him, whenever it was possible, in English from any other book).
- 9) Soligman, p. 423.
- 10) Bruce, Arkell, Westermann, (and Crawford to a certain extent).
- 11) The Fung Chronicles, Awad, Bouscilly, and Jackson are for the Arab origin, Chatway and Walder are for an eastern origin, i.e. the Fung were sent by Abyssinia to restore order after the fall of Christian Noba.
- 12) Tremax, and later on Arkell.

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of open war in certain cases of Shilluk history. The country is further divided in two religious provinces corresponding to the political provinces, also opposed to each other in certain crucial times such as the event of electing a new king.

The questions now arise: From where did Nyikang stem, and to which racial and cultural area did he (and the first wanderers of his own family) belong? and when?

The only detectable physical description relating to Nyikang which I was able to find during my fieldwork among the Shilluk was that Nyikang was a man of medium stature, and of a (relatively) fair complexion. Relevant to this point is that the effigy of Nyikang kept at his shrine at Akurva is relatively shorter than that of Duk, son of Nyikang. If the complexion was really fair, and there is every possibility that this might be so, then Nyikang's original race typology must have at least a primary degree of Hamitic-negro's mixture if they are not pure Hamitic. 12) It follows then that any effort to pursue Nyikang to his original homeland must be directed to either:

- a) the Hamitic homeland around the present Nilotic enclave, or
- b) the area of possible hybrid on the marginal Hamitic homes, again around this Nilotic enclave.

In other words, the possible home of Nyikang is either to the North or to the East, i.e. Northern Sudan or the Abyssinian plateau, with their marginal areas of race mixture.

From the cultural point of view, there are two possibilities detectable from the Shilluk mythology, though contradictory:

- A) Nyikang was born in a place where real kingship was known, with a system of electing kings. The electors seemed to be the chiefs and the officers of the country, and it appeared that there was no hope for any candidate to put his claims into effect by means of force, if this electoral council turned him down. Another evidence of this real kingship is found in the presence of a stool, the symbol of the throne. A stool in these parts of the Sudan was originally a representation of "the prerogative of the great, and often only of the king, and so a sign of authority". 13)
- B) The original home of Nyikang represented a nomadic cultural type, because agriculture was not known. The tradition tells that the brother of Nyikang who was elected king, threw a sort of digging stick, used for digging graves, towards Nyikang when he left the country. This meant that Nyikang and his followers would perish. But Nyikang, when he settled in the present Shilluk country, used the stick as an agricultural implement.

12) It may be also an Arab-Negro mixture, because at that time the Arabs were already on the Bahr el Ghazal borders. My informants told me that Nyikang met the Rozuqat Baggara Arabs in his second period of wandering.

13) Arbell, (A), p. 227.

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So here is the choice: Nyikang's homeland may be either a civilized state or a semi-civilized state with real kingship, or a pure nomadic type which did not know agriculture, and presumably with a sort of chieftainship. Again there are states with kingship in the North represented by Alwa kingdom with her petty kingdoms in the Gezira, and states with kingship in the East represented by Kaffa kingdom and many other petty kingdoms in south-western Abyssinia. There are also Nomads in the North - in the vast plains of Kordofan and southern Darfur, and in the East represented by the Galla stock. Through future studies we can solve this problem by deciding the possibility of the North or the East as the original home of Nyikang, but this is outside the compass of our present investigation.

Now we come to the third point, namely, when did the migration begin, or when did the foundation of the Shilluk kingdom take place? Naturally, the fixing of such a date will be merely a hypothetical one, built upon the conventional way of dating the period of African kingdoms. The kings list of the Shilluk includes 32 kings up to the present time. Concerning the Shilluk specifically, we have three ways of reckoning the date of Nyikang:

- a) by allowing $15\frac{1}{2}$ years for every king as a reigning period 14) and by beginning with king number 31, who reigned until 1951, we get the date of Nyikang at 1533 A.D.
- b) by reckoning $15\frac{1}{2}$ years to each king who preceded the king number 23, whose reign began about 1863, the first time the Egyptian government reached the Shilluk country, we get the date of 1666 A.D. as the time of establishing the Shilluk kingdom.
- c) the third criterion is getting the mean years of reigning for kings number 23 to 31, whose dates are known to something approaching certainty, and allowing for one king who governed only one year, and then applying this mean to the whole list of the Shilluk kings, we arrive at the date of 1610 as the beginning of Nyikang's rule. This date is the result of 11 years multiplied by 31 kings.

As all these dates are merely hypothetical, and as it is in reality a way of giving only an idea about the time, and not a fixed and a valid date, it follows that to stick to one of those dates, and to build theories upon it is neither correct nor scientific. What we can say is that about the second half of the 16th century Nyikang founded his rule in the present Shilluk area. If dates give clues to the history of origins, could it have been the case that the upheaval in the Gezira area - the result of the downfall of the Alwa kingdom of Soba about the beginning of the 16th century - had, to a certain extent, something to do with the arrival of Nyikang and his family in the Shillukland? At any rate, we will return to the point of timing the Shilluk migration later on.

14) "Mr. B. Struck, by taking into consideration all the available (written or unwritten) chronicles of African dynasties, has made a calculation on the average duration of the reign of an African ruler". Westermann, P. LI.

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To sum up what has been said above we may say that about the second half of the 16th century, a relatively fair complexioned wave of people settled in the present Shillukland, and united the aboriginals under the leadership of Nyikang into the framework of a nation. 174

The Shilluk traditions, as my informants told me, reveal that the ruling class brought with it the system of kingship. Nyikang had taught the people the exact procedure of electing the new kings; a procedure which is followed to the word until our day. If this is true, we can presume that Nyikang, when he taught the Shilluk this unwritten law, was quoting as much as possible the succession law of his own homeland. Some of the important procedures, or let us say a rite performed to know if the deity gives his consent to the new king-elect, is performed under the waters of the Nile. Quite readily this rite would be understood if we remember the Shilluk tradition which says that the original home of Nyikang was situated on the banks of a *NAM DOUN*, which means a great river or a lake. [173]

Hofmayr tell us that Tugo, the Shilluk king number 10, who reigned between 1690 and 1710, was the first king to introduce new coronation ceremonies. He says: "Tugo führte neue Krönungszeremonien ein, an welchen die Shilluk noch heute streng festhalten". 15) If this is true, and if we reject the story told to me by my informants, and presuming that Nyikang's own family were a stock of nomads, we can say that the present Shilluk kingship was a cultural element among the aboriginal inhabitants of the area, which may have been dormant during the first rule of kings who were still clinging strongly to their own traditions, and most naturally looking down upon the aboriginal practices and cults. A hundred years later, the glorious past of the ruling cast may have dimmed, and mixture and degradation of some of the ruling family members may have ultimately brought about new "shillukized" generations, thus bringing the old customs into practice. This is a mere conjecture that needs more study to prove or refute it, and this is not the right place to discuss it.

The famous divine kingship among the Shilluk is still in practice. The notion of the kings being the incarnations of the first king, i.e. Nyikang, is still working, and the coronation ceremony of King Kar, in 1951, 17) is an undisputed proof of the existence of such a notion. When such an idea is so strongly adhered to unto now - no matter if they are Moslem or Christian Shilluk converts - it follows quite logically that the other component of the divine kingship must be functioning, or at least be still vivid in men's mind, and will be readily executed if there were free chances. 18) The other component is naturally 643

15) Hofmayr, p. 77

16) Westerman, p. 163, translates a story about the objection of Nyikang to human sacrifices practiced by some mysterious people of the river, whom he captured and incorporated in his domains. [174]

17) Howell, pp. 189-203. This article contains a good picture of Shilluk kings installation ceremonies. [648]

18) The government does not allow it any more.

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e) The Capital:

This is Fashoda where the king resides, and where the highest native court of appeal is held under the presidency of the king himself.

The meaning of such a political organization is quite clear. The chief of every division is not selected or appointed by the king, but elected by the group concerned, and is formally invested by a dress from the king as a symbol of his authority. The basis of the Shilluk political system is lineage or clan, and has nothing to do with blood relationship to the royal family.

The present Shilluk country, it is said, is only a part of what was the Shillukland before. Just how far the Shilluk expansion did reach is controversial. My informants insisted on the fact that Nyikang reached the confluence of the White and the Blue Niles, and built a village there; and he sent messengers northwards to scout the area, but these messengers returned after reaching the site of the present Wadi Halfa (22° north latitude), informing Nyikang of the poverty of the area. After receiving this report, Nyikang did not consider another expedition, and returned to Akurva where he was last seen. This is quite clearly an exaggeration, because at that time the state of affairs in the central and northern Sudan was just beginning to take its present shape. Moreover, the Fung kingdom and the Arab state of Gerri were in their first phases of formation, i.e. politically and militarily strong enough, and on the watch against newcomers and adventurers.

What may have been the case is that probably the Shilluk, taking advantage of their capacity as good river-farers, descended the White Nile in their canoes.

Now the White Nile is an interesting water course from the geographical, geological and hydrological points of view. The life story of this river, though controversial, is an interesting one, but what concerns us here is that the river is very weak, shallow and broad, with many islands, many curves, studded with swamps on each side, full of grass vegetation, fords, an ill defined basin, and in the flood season the water inundates large stretches on both sides. Such a geographical environment provides an economically poor land, with no attraction to wealthy agricultural states. But, on the other hand, it provides a paradise for fishermen, refugees, and to a certain extent a good grazing and watering area for nomads during the dry season. Such a state of affairs is well described in the following quotation:

"Le Bahar el Abiad (the White Nile) arrose ce territoire, & divise, soit par l'art, soit par la nature, en un nombre considerable de petits canaux, il forme autant de petites îles, sur chacune desquelles il y a un village ... Les habitants sont tous pêcheurs, & ont des canots avec lesquels ils remontent & descendent (Le fleuve) ... " (22)

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133 From the strategical point of view, this broad, shallow and swampy water course would provide a sort of permanent border to any state east or west of it, as well as a kind of no-man's land, in which case river foragers are safe.

174 It is most probable that the Shilluk, perhaps with their leader Nyikang, or alone, undertook many scouting expeditions downstream, and it may be the case that their economic activities as fishermen also took them down stream where they found the good shelters which the Islands provide. Furthermore, the Shilluk may have taken advantage of their safe positions, and of their skill with their canoes, to fall upon wandering nomads by surprise, and loot their cattle on both sides of the river. In this way it came to be that Shilluk villages were reported on the Islands 23) south of 13 degrees latitude.

173 174 We do not know whether such settlements were permanent or seasonal, but the existence of such settlements must not at all mean that the Shilluk occupied both sides for sure, or even established Shilluk authority for a single generation. This is quite clear from Shilluk tradition itself. Quoting my informants, I would rather say that Nyikang stayed some years down stream, and then returned. There was no other repetition of such a Shilluk adventure. None of the followers of Nyikang tried to press their claim northward. Moreover, the Shilluk traditions define the country as being 'from Muemo to Tung' 24), these being the present Shilluk borders. Had it been more once, why was it not preserved in the tradition?

c) The FUNG

173 The Fung kingdom was one of the most important kingdoms that ever rose in the Sudan. It was the sole heir to the Alwa kingdom. The founder of the Islamic Empire was a man called Amara Dunkas. There is evidence that this Amara was, before founding Sennar, a king of an area which may be defined as corresponding to the present Southern Butana 25), the area where the Abyssinian plateau and the Sudan plains meet. His capital was called Lamul, 26) which some historians put on the present Ethiopian and Eritrean border, between the rivers Takasse and Kher al Ghah. 27)

It is agreed that Amara Dunkas did not conquer Seba, the Capital of Alwa, alone, but he was a higher partner with another Arab chief in this great task. The Fung Chronicles tell us that Amara rallied his forces near Jebel Moya and moved north, while the Arabs moved south from their stronghold near the sixth cataract, and together smashed Seba. 28)

23) Westermann, p. XX.

24) Lienhardt, p. 161.

25) Bosaily, p. 48, defines the first kingdom of Amara as including the northwestern part of the present Ethiopia.

26) Crawford, pp. 134-142. A description of Reuben's journey and how he met Amara in Lamul. Arkell in (A) tried to reduce the name Lamul to Lul, a district in the present Shillukland.

27) Bosaily's opinion given to me in a personal discussion in Cairo.

28) Awad, p. 252.

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Now the opinions of different writers on the way Soba fell, form a controversial point. Before summarising these different ideas, it is better to define the elements which played a rôle in this act of history:

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a) Alva kingdom:

The Capital was Soba - a town situated on the eastern bank of the Blue Nile near the present Khartoum. The boundaries of this kingdom must have been reduced much by Arab infiltration in the north, east and west. The Gosiira must have been the last property with ill-defined borders to the extreme south.

b) Arab settlers:

These are reported to be living peacefully in the Alva towns, 20) being a "part of the economic structure" 30) of Alva.

c) Arab nomads:

These were new-comers, who surged in powerful waves after the ascendancy of the Mamluks and Turks in Egypt. They were more fanatic, and their economic status was as yet unsettled, "their activities being competitive and not complementary" 31) to the Alva kingdom.

d) The Fung:

A kingdom in the southern Butana and Gosiira which was seeking safe and free trade routes to Cairo and the northern world.

The Fung chronicles say that "d" and "c" allied together against "a)" and "b)", and in the decisive battle of Arbaki the Alvan army was routed.

Mr. Chataway says that the Fung were "a leader with an army sent by Dancas (Abyssinia) to re-establish the older order and relationships (with Alva? or this part of the Sudan at all?)" 32) His explanation is that Arabs "c)" conquered Soba, and that "d)" united with "b)", and together conquered Arabs "c)", and afterwards, the chief of "b)" was "given a position of great importance" in the Fung kingdom. 33)

To James Bruce and Arkell the elements of the scene were: a) Alva, b) Arabs, c) Shilluk.

29) Trimmingham, p. 73, and Arkell (A), p. 203. Both translate the Selim description of Soba.

30) Chataway, p. 116.

31) ibid, p. 116.

32) ibid, p. 116.

33) ibid, p. 116.

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174 According to these two authors, the Shilluk made an attack on the Arabs and defeated them; the Arabs were reduced to a tributary state under the Shilluk. Arkell elaborates on the subject with his European mentality of statesman, and proceeds to say that the Shilluk, by a mastery of diplomacy, changed the injured pride of the Arabs to complete alliance with them, by diverting their attention to a common foe. To such high diplomacy, the Alva kingdom fell as a sacrifice. (34) Thus, the downfall of the Alva kingdom was undertaken by a combined Shilluk-Arab force !!

175 We may now proceed to give a short historical outline of the Fung kingdom, leaving this controversial point to be discussed below.

In 1534 Amara Dunkas died, leaving a vast realm which extended northward to the third cataract, including Dongola, and eastward to the Red Sea; but Suakin was a Turkish possession at that time. The White Nile probably marked the western border to latitude 13°, whence northwards the country to the west bank, which comprised Arabs from the Jaalin group, must have been under the rule of the Viceroy of Senner residing at Gerri. To the south, the Fung border included some provinces of present Ethiopia, namely Gubba, Ganjar, and Fadasi. The border in southern Gezira was not clear, but sporadic hints indicate that the Fung expanded steadily southwards. This point will also be discussed later.

The next expansion of the Fung was during the reign of King Abdul Qador, the second or third king. He reduced Jebel Gula, and converted the inhabitants to Islam. The third expansion was also to the south-west. King Badi Abu Dign crossed the White Nile in 1642, invaded the Tegal Moslem kingdom and reduced it to a tributary state. He also "attacked the Shilluk negroes and took a large number of slaves". (35)

In Fung history, there were two wars with Abyssinia in which there was no decisive result, except for the routing of most of the Abyssinian king's army in the second war. But these wars are not relevant to our subject.

In the year 1747, during the reign of King Badi Abu Shillukh, (36) the Fung Empire reached the zenith of its expansion. The whole of Kordofan was won to the Fungs by a man called Mohamed Abu El Keilik. During a battle with the Darfur Army, the Fung were first defeated, "the troops fled, but were rallied by Mohamed Abu El Keilik and his sons, who defeated the Army of the Furs, led

34) Arkell, (A), p.

35) Westermann, p. LV.

36) Westermann, p. LV, mis-spells his name, and writes it as Gadi Abu Shilluk, probably he was motivated by the theory of the Shilluk origin of the Fung, and found in the name another backing to the theory, forgetting that by adding "h" at the end, the word would mean -in Sudanese Arabic- the different modes of face scars used until now in the Arabic Sudan. Abu Shillukh is not a name, but a nickname, and we find it frequent that nicknames were given to many Fung kings, according to their characteristics.

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by Sultan of the Hamjara and Sheikh of the Musahant at Shamkata ... 175
On the news of Abu El Keilik's victories and the courage he displayed reaching Sennar, the king appointed him commander-in-chief; he was also made 'Sheikh' of Kordofan, and granted the visiership (of the kingdom) ... 37)

With the success of Abu El Keilik, the downfall of the real Fung kings began, and from that time on the government was in the hands of the ministers. Abu El Keilik is said to be from the Hamag, a section of Fung subjects we will discuss later. But it is also said that he is of Arab descent, from the Gannu'ia tribe, and his mother was a Hamag. At any rate the kings were deposed at the wish of the ministers, and the last stand of the kings was smothered with great slaughter in the reign of King Adlan II (1776-1788, after which the power of the ministers was undisputed until 1820, when the Egyptian Army put an end to the already decayed Fung kingdom.

The Fung kingdom was, from the very start, founded on an alliance between the Fung leader and the Arab leader of the northern Arab tribes, i.e. a dual system. The kingdom remained so until the very end, and that was the major political division of the country. Within each part of the kingdom there were semi-independent states or chieftainships. In the north there was the Shaiqia, Shandi, and El-Damer. In the south there were Faxogli, Gule, Khashma al Bahr and Keili. The Shukria, a powerful Arab tribe in the central Butana plains, was to a certain extent independent. It is also said that there were provinces of which we do not know much regarding their political organization and their boundaries. 36) These are Jebel Moya, Abud, both in central Gassira, Baila, and Fawa in the southern Butana. Sennar itself, while being the capital of the whole kingdom, exercised direct government on the whole of northern Gassira up to the junction of the White and Blue Niles. Gerri was the seat of the viceroys of the northern part of the kingdom, and its direct rule was said to extend on the eastern bank of the Blue Nile as far south as the confluence of the river Bialar, and eastwards to the Eritrean border.

As may now be seen, the kingdom was a federation of petty states, corresponding to a large extent to the tribal as well as the geographical units within a large framework of a state under the Fung dynasty.

The racial elements in this kingdom ranged from Negroes and Negroids to "Hamites" and "Semites". The broader character of the northern part is undisputedly Caucasian, while the south was an outspoken Negro-land. Reciprocal migrations in both directions, North and South, brought about the present ethnic melange. 174 ●

37) Jackson, pp. 50-51

38) *ibid.*, p. 102

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- 174 But an almost continuous influx of nomads, who are of Semitic or Hamito-Semitic origin, brought about the nearly complete annihilation of Negroid elements in the North, except in such refuge areas as Nubia. In the South, the geographical environment and the paucity of the Caucasian blood, in comparison with the Negro element, created a new type, culturally clinging to the northern element, though outcrops of the old culture remain in function, modified to the new superstructure.

What is of interest to our present paper is the discussion of three names which are misunderstood, these being Fung, Hamag and Bar Fung.

- 114 The Fung: Bruce gives the singular of the name by 'fungi', and the plural 'fungi'. This is a pure Shilluk form, 'e' being in Shilluk the ending of the noun in singular, and 'i' that of plural. 30) Now the Arabic singular form of the word is 'funji', and the plural is 'funj' with a very slight 'e' at the end of the word. Did Bruce mix the positions, and instead of writing the singular, write the plural, or vice versa? We have to bear in mind that it was certainly difficult for Bruce to write Arabic, using the Latin alphabet, and so this 'e' came at the end of his supposed singular form of the word as a substitute for the Arabic 'e' movement, which we call 'dammah'. At any rate the etymology of the word needs further study, should we not confine the comparison to Shilluk and Arabic only. All authorities on the subject agree that the Fung were a family, not a tribe, which developed numerous offshoots through marriage. The original physical characters, most naturally, will be modified according to the mothers. Thus, we have for example a fair offshoot like Saadi el Ahmer, meaning Saadi the red, due to his white complexion, and we have King Ismail, whom Bruce met at Sennar, and who appeared to him as a typical Negro. So it seems unwise to judge the origin of a family by one instance, if we know that proper Islam does not discriminate races and colours, and accordingly Fung kings married without discrimination, and accordingly different physical types ruled as kings in Sennar.
- 174 The Hamag: This name was heard often after the Visiers of Sennar took the real power into their hands, beginning from Mohammed Abu El Kallik, i.e. the beginning of the decadent phase of the kingdom. Seligman says that "Hamag in Arabic means 'ignorant', and is used to indicate a slave or vassal ..." 40) The word in Arabic could mean also an uncultivated, brute, barbarian, disorganized group, wild etc. ... Professor Awad says "In Burma, Arabs call the aboriginal inhabitants 'Nuba' ... (and that) some Arabs give the name 'damag' to the tribe of Kanem, this being a nomenclature they were used to in the East (in the Sudan of the Nile Valley)". 41)

30) Westermann; p. LIII.

40) Seligman, p. 416

41) Awad, p. 293.

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So it appears that Arabs gave this name to a 'hodge podge' of peoples in southern Gessira. Who are these peoples? "Professor Evans-Pritchard suggests that the Hamag are, or were, predominantly Narta-speaking. So-called Hamag are found at Ressiras, on Jebel Moya and Jebel Gule, and probably on other hills of which we have no knowledge; indeed Mr. L.F. Walder writes to us of this 'disappearing race' as formerly occupying a wide area in the Southern Gessira, through Jebel Manum and Ball to Jebel Moya and along the banks of the Blue Nile. This is only a fraction of their old territory; in the FUTUH EL KARBASSAN, they are said to extend from Shiri to Kassala, a territory now occupied by the Abyssinian people called Basen ... there is no doubt that the present day representatives of the latter (Hamag) are the mixed population of a number of the hills between the White and Blue Niles. These form groups of more or less arabized Negroids ... 42) Awad says that "the Hamag are the tribes or the peoples upon whom the Fung extended their suzerainty. They are a melange of tribes, and their languages are numerous". 43) He also states that "the peoples (who were comprised in the Fung kingdom) were naturally not from a Fung origin, and it was necessary to differentiate between the class to which the name applies (i.e. Fung) and the other peoples. That is why we see that all these peoples -or the majority of them- are called Hamag; and it is not easy to point out precisely to which of these peoples the name was applied". 44)

To understand the problems more clearly, we have to differentiate between two kinds of Hamag, though their origin may be the same. These two sections are:

- a) The Hamag, who accepted Islam as their religion and mixed freely with the other segments of the Sennar kingdom. These, I suppose, are the famous Hamag of the decadent phase of Sennar. Naturally, their Islam is not deep enough to prevent such practices of their old religion and culture. These may be found now in small groups and to whom, it appears, Mr. Walder's remark can be applied. The cause of the apparent disappearance of this group is quite clear. The process of assimilation is the sole cause for such disappearance, because 1) it has now been long enough after their conversion to Islam that the segments of their old heritage that kept them united, should be broken, and 2) the ascendancy of a Hamag family to power in Sennar may have reinforced the Hamag unity by adding vanity and glory to their tradition. Now it is more than a century, since the Sennar kingdom and the Hamag supremacy gave way, and such political motive is now useless.
- b) The Hamag, who remained intact and preserved their old heritage, are those who were to a greater extent out of reach of the direct Fung rule. These are the peoples who took refuge in the difficult

42) Seligman, p. 415/416.

43) Awad, p. 219.

44) *ibid.*, p. 226.

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● 174 and relatively poor hills of Southern Senegal, the area known as Dar Fung.

Dar Fung: The name in Arabic means the home of the Fung, but this area has really nothing to do with the Fung home, except that a part of it was included in the Fung kingdom. This nomenclature is merely administrative and could mislead if warning were not given from the start.

This area forms a geographical unit with the Senegal to the north. They are both confined by the White and the Blue Niles; both are plains studded with 'Inselbergs', but these isolated mountains and rocky hills are higher, more numerous, and occupy bigger areas in the South than in the North, i.e. in Dar Fung. Seligman writes that "Many of these Jebels are of considerable size, and whenever there is water on or near them, they support settlements which, to judge by the stone implements found on the sites, date back to immemorial antiquity, indeed to the Old Stone Age". 45) This area is bordered by the Abyssinian highlands to the East, and limited to the South by a swampy area, geographically and hydrologically unknown, and mostly uninhabited. From this swampy area, many Khors (seasonal streams) take their source. Between hills, valleys with walls, and khors occur.

As this forms a refuge area, we find the people inhabiting the hills. These peoples do not form a united tribe; they are Negroes and Negroids with various different cultures and languages. But on the whole, this area is characterized by the presence of a kind of "throwing stick resembling the Australian man-return boomerang", 46) and the use of the bow and poisoned arrows. The existence of these kinds of weapons are not recorded in any part of the central Sudan and may be taken as a proof of the antiquity of the tribes of Dar Fung. Moreover, the existence of sun worship among the Ingassana tribe is quite queer, and surely indicates foreign influence. The Soba stone in Jebel Gule is regarded as the "steal of kingdom ... upon which every paramount chief (mangil) assumes office". 47) Soba is also perceived by Gule inhabitants as: 1) a great Queen; 2) as their ancestress; and 3) as a deity whom they worship. Soba, it should be remembered, was the capital of the Christian Alwa Kingdom, to which reference has been made above. King killing is also prevalent among many of these tribes, but reference to it will be made below.

Such different cultural traits, still persistent among one or the other of the Dar Fung tribes, indicate, no doubt, different cultural layers, stripped from chronological sequence, and practiced haphazardly in this back-water of humanity.

45) Seligman, p. 413

46) *ibid*, p. 413

47) *ibid*, p. 428.

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2) SUMMARY:

Now we come to our point: What was the actual relationship between the Fung and the Shilluk?

In the light which was thrown upon the whole situation from the foregoing survey, and in order not to lose ourselves in minute details, we may fix the points of discussion in the following items:

- 1) The time problem, i.e. dating the foundation of both kingdoms
- 2) The space problem, i.e. the Fung-Shilluk boundary
- 3) The cultural aspects of kingship
 - a) the meaning of kingship
 - b) the mode of accession to the throne
 - c) the mode of death of kings.
- 4) Evidences of the theory of a Shilluk origin of the Fung
- 5) Conclusion.

1) The Time Problem:

Bruce and Tremaux date the foundation of the Fung kingdom at 1504, Shousair dates it to 1505, while Gailliaud gives 1484 as the date of founding the kingdom. 40) Now if we apply the conventional way of dating back histories, and assume $13\frac{1}{2}$ years as a reigning period for each king, we get the following dates:

- a) At the time Bruce was in Sennar, namely 1778, the ruling king was Ismail, who appears on the list of the Fung kings as number 20, and who ascended the throne in 1769. Multiplying $13\frac{1}{2}$ years by 10 kings would give 1811 as the beginning of the kingdom;
- b) Gailliaud, Tremaux and Shousair list 29 kings from the beginning of the dynasty until the Egyptian conquest in 1820. This would give us an approximate date of 1425.

Thus, we have a difference of 84 years between a) and b). This hypothetical difference is well accounted for in the real dates we possess. It was mentioned before that the decadent phase of the Fung began about 1765. The total period of the last 10 kings is only 44 years instead of 135 years, making a difference of 91 years, which corresponds to 84 years of difference between a) and b). This is an almost certain result and proves the validity of the $13\frac{1}{2}$ years as a criterion serving our purpose here.

Concerning the Shilluk, we have stated above the dates of 1523, 1646 and 1610 as representing different results of different criterions. From my point of view, I would prefer the date of 1566 as marking the beginning of the Shilluk kingdom, because it is based on the $13\frac{1}{2}$ years criterion, and it is reckoned from a fixed date, i.e. 1843, when the Shilluk tribe and land were incorporated as a province in the Sudan. Furthermore, we know that in the Mahdiya Regime and its aftermath, Shilluk kings were either killed or deposed, thus

40) Jackson, p. 88.

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- 174 making it difficult to get a more or less accurate date indicating the beginning of the Shilluk as a unified nation under the present dynasty.

Another point which may give an additional clue to the timing problem, and which supports the idea that the Shilluk are comparatively younger as a kingdom than the Fung, is what Westerman mentions in his book about the Shilluk. He states that "In 1770 they (the Fung) even wrested the province of Kordofan from the Darfur kings, but it was retaken by the latter five years later. This was about the time when the Dinkas emigrated from the Bahr el Ghazal and took possession of the right bank of the White Nile under their great chief Akwai Chakab; by them the Fung were expelled from the eastern shores of the White Nile into the Blue Nile region". 49) About this time, the kings Naser (1766-1769), and Ismail 1769-1776) were ruling in Sennar, and about that time also Bruce was in Sennar (1772), yet he never mentioned an event of such great consequence !!!

During this same period we read in Hofmayr that Toket, the king number 9 in the Shilluk list, was a man of militant type, and he undertook so many military expeditions and adventures that the Shilluk nicknamed him 'the Conqueror'. Hofmayr continues: "Bald nach seinem Regierungsantritte hat Toket Gelegenheit, seine kriegerischen Eigenschaften zu betätigen. Die Stämme der Dinka trafen um diese Zeit Vorbereitungen zu einem Ausrottungskrieg, da die Völker der Shilluk, welche zwischen ihre beiden Abteilungen eingekleilt lebten, ein für sie mächtiges Hindernis bildeten ... Den vom Bahr-el-Ghazal kommenden Dinka gelang es durchzubrechen und sich am östlichen Nilufer anzusiedeln, so dass die Shilluk sich zwischen beiden Dinkazweigen eingekleilt befanden". 50) It is natural that the Shillukland would form the shortest way for a Dinka migration from Bahr el Ghazal to the eastern banks of the White Nile. The wars with the Dinka continued during Toket's reign and those of his successor's. Toket reigned about 1690 or 1700, according to our method of 13 1/2 years, and from 1670 to 1690 according to Hofmayr. 51) A migration led by a chief like Chakab does not require a century or 70 years to achieve its target, and unless we refute Westerman's date of the coming of the White Nile Dinka, we are obliged to state that the Shilluk are more recent in history than the Fung. Such a migration took place during the time of the ninth Shilluk king, and completed its objective during the nineteenth Fung king's rule, and allowing only a generation (33 years) for the whole process, from the beginning of the migration at its end, we may see that, at most, the twelfth Shilluk king was contemporaneous with the nineteenth Fung king, i.e. the Fung preceded the Shilluk by 40 years at least.

49) Westermann, p. LV.

50) Hofmayr, pp. 72-73.

51) *ibid.*, p. 72.

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2) The Space Problems

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It has been stated above in the Fung Chronicles that Amara Dunqas rallied his forces at Jebel Moya, west of Sennar, before launching his final attack against the Alwa kingdom. And henceforth, until the fall of the Fung kingdom in 1820, this area in central Senira remained the capital, and accordingly the center of power in the Fung history.

To the south and on the Blue Nile, there was another center of power: Fasugli, with a list of kings from 1616 83) onwards until 1820. These kings were vassals of the Sennar kings, and apparently their power extended over the whole Berta-speaking tribes, now mostly in Ethiopia. To the west of Fasugli there was another vassal chieftainship on Jebel Gule, and its power extended to the northwestern group of mountains that form the Dar Fung area. The real date of erecting this chieftainship is much disputed.

The whole of Beni Shangul tribe, and the Fadasi area, now within the borders of modern Ethiopia, were provinces incorporated in the Fung state. On the sheet North, No C 36, Sobat, of the 1 : 1,000,000 of African Maps, Fadasi lies about 9°45' Northern latitude, and 34°45' Eastern longitude. The Beni Shangul tribes are found to the north and northeast of Fadasi.

Arkell says: "After consolidating the kingdom from Sennar, with a relative established at Laich (El-Ais - Kawa) as a governor of their Shilluk relatives on the lower White Nile, the Fung kings soon gradually to have extended their dominion south up the Blue Nile as far as the Abyssinian highlands beyond Beni Shangul and Fadasi, and later east, to include the Beni Amer, and west as far as the Nuba Mountains and the frontiers of Darfur". 83)

Also Mr. Chataway recognizes this state of affairs in the south, stating that the Mekship of Keili was first governed from Dica, a town on the Blue Nile north of Roseires, to be moved later on southwards to Regrieg, and finally to Keili. This Keili lies at 10°50' northern latitude, and 34°20' eastern longitude, and must have exercised power on the whole of the northeastern Dar Fung.

These two evidences show that the Fung were expanding consistently southwards, and this expansion, as Arkell's statement implies, was before the Fung expansion across the White Nile to the Nuba mountains and Kordofan. Moreover, this continuous expansion to the south continued through all the Fung history in spite of other expansions to west or east, and in spite of internal conflicts in Sennar. This is proved by Mr. Chataway's

83) Jackson, p. 104

83) Arkell, (A) p. 247.

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174 statement "that the people of these hills (the Barun) were only conquered by the Fung after the visitors had seized power, i.e. just over a hundred years ago". 54)

We can conclude from the foregoing statements that expansion to the south was a constant feature of the Fung policy, be it an intended policy, or just the sequence of events, and the economic and geopolitical reasons which led to it.

Now if we turn to the White Nile Area, the district in which any possible contact between the Shilluk and the Fung may occur, we find only vague material in the Fung traditions about its political status. We know that later on, the White Nile was a crossroad to the Fung governed areas to the west. And from this time also we know that a garrison was stationed at El-Ais, the governor of which was not suffered to leave it. This is quite a logical assumption, because we know that the shortest way across the Gezira is from El-Ais to Sennar, and due to the power of the Darfur kingdom, which was felt strongly on the plains of Kordofan, no better defence line for Sennar could be found than the broad White Nile. So, a military station had to be erected here, and no wonder if the commander of this post was not allowed to leave his duties. This may be the most logical explanation of the state of affairs during the middle to the last parts of the Fung kingdom. But what was the situation in the early phase of the Fung?

It is quite clear that all the Arab tribes on the western bank of the White Nile to at least 13 degrees Northern Latitude were incorporated into the Fung kingdom from the start, or at least loyal to the Abdul-Lach Sheikh, the viceroys of Sennar in the North. On the eastern banks, the Sennar authority must have dominated till at least 18 degrees Northern Latitude, which is facing the Mukahip of Gula, and separated from the White Nile by a stretch of 80 Kilometers of flat land.

If we remember that the Binka occupied the eastern White Nile banks comparatively late, 55) and that at this time in the early Fung period, until the middle of the 19th century, slavery constituted an important part of economy, and adding that the eastern as well as the western banks of the White Nile are characterized by their flatness, we get a picture illustrating the situation in the area in at least the first half of the 19th century; numerous slave and ivory expeditions on the part of the Fung up the White Nile basin, with -maybe- a kind of military garrison to secure the safety of these expeditions. What better situation for such a garrison than either Jebel Ahmed Agha on the eastern White Nile bank on the 11th degree Northern Latitude, or the area of the present Malakal, where the various Nile tributaries unite in one main artery?

54) Seligman, p. 442.

55) See above p.

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I have proposed Jebel Ahmed Agha as a site of the Fung garrison, because it is well protected by the mountain, and its older name was mentioned by Verno as Bafafanj in 1840, by Pethrick in 1862 as Jebel Tofan, by the Gula (mayer) of Abu Geili, as Jebel Tiafan, and by Haider as Jebels Toifa and Fam. 66) Of interest to us is that Bafafanj means in Arabic The Bank of the Fung. It could imply the borders of the Fung.

The other choice, the present Malakal area as a site for a Fung garrison, is supported by the Shilluk tradition. Here, we come to solid proof that the Fung and the Shilluk did contact each other. At the very beginning of the Shilluk history as told by their tradition, Nyikang, while consolidating his power in the Shillukland by subduing the various segments of the original inhabitants, met with a force called Cai or Ja puny 57), which are both identical with the people of Sennar, or the Fung. The Shilluk tradition tells of a battle at Wau - a locality a little north of Malakal - between the Fung and the Shilluk under Nyikang's leadership. Though the Shilluk were not victorious in this battle, the Fung seem to have retired to the north, perhaps to Jebel Ahmed Agha.

This was the first Shilluk-Fung encounter; a hostile relationship! Afterwards, we hear of more relations, of wars and slave hunting, and even of a kind of alliance in warfare. The end result of such changing relationships was the existence of many Shilluk slaves and warriors among the inhabitants of the Sennar area, in addition to other slaves from the Nuba Mountains, and other parts of the Negroid and Negro Sudan.

Thus, we may see that the Fung were expanding to the south always, and if they expanded in the Dar Fung area - which is a mountainous area - it would be easier for them to extend their rule up the White Nile basin, which afforded no such geographical hindrances, and simultaneously afforded a bigger and wider influx of resources such as slaves, ivory, and other articles of trade, which were not only consumed in Sennar, but found other markets in Western Asia and Europe through Cairo. But as the upper White Nile basin is more or less an area infested with swamps and other ecological conditions alien to the Arabs and to the Fung settlers, there were no well defined borders. It was merely a highway, and in a political sense a no-man's land.

3) The Cultural Aspects of Kingship

a) The meaning of kingship:

Among the Shilluk, all writers agree that the notion of kingship is an undivided part of the Shilluk religion. Nyikang, though a national hero and possibly a real historical personality, is considered by the Shilluk to be still living to protect the land

66) Arkell, (A), p. 216.

67) Lienhardt, p. 144, see footnote No 1.

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114
174 4) Evidence of the Theory of a Shilluk origin of the Fung

James Bruce was the first to declare that the Fung were originally a Shilluk northern offshoot, who descended upon the Arabs, defeated them, and erected Sennar as a seat of their new Kingdom.

First of all, it is quite clear from the Journal of Bruce that he was very much interested in the Shangalla, and probably confused Shangalla, Shankala, and Shilluk. Once, while in Tenwa near Gedaraf, he said that "The Fung were originally Shankala or Hamidge", 61) and on arriving at Sennar, he added, "and are, as they are called, Funge, that is Shangalla converted to Islamism, of the country whence these Shangalla came to drive out the Arabs under Wad Agib. Of these, the government is composed. The common Shilook, or troops of the king, are mostly pagans even yet." 62)

Further quotations from Bruce give an idea about the mess into which he had fallen. He says that the king of Sennar pretends to be of noble Arab element, "but his woolly hair, and black flat features, show him to be a Shangalla; the particular name Shilook. These inhabit the large islands in the river El-Aice (the White Nile) ... The name of Shankala, given to the true blacks in Abyssinia, is not known in the kingdom of Sennar, though in features and complexion they are the same people. The river El-Aice is twice as broad as the Nile and very deep in all the course of it. Before it joins the Nile are many islands, in these dwell the Shilook, who rob in barks up the whole of it. The other blacks come from Guba, Noba, and Fasuolo, three southern provinces which depend on Sennar". 63)

The Shangalla or the Beni Shangul are Negroes of negroid tribes, living in the river valleys in the mountainous western Abyssinian escarpment. They were included within the Fung kingdom throughout its history.

It would seem that the description of the White Nile, which Bruce names El-Aice, and the description of the people who inhabit the islands of this river, is quite a separate sentence, which has nothing to do with the preceding sentence, in which he returns the Fung to a Shangalla origin. This assumption is validated by the above quotation, in which he says that the Fung are the Shangalla converted to Islam, and defines the Shilluk as the troops of the king. But this again contradicts the famous quotation, in which Bruce asserts that in 1604 a Shilluk migration founded Sennar.

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174 It is interesting to know that Bruce's statement about the Nile was not correct. He imagined that the Blue Nile was the

133 61) Arkell, (A), p. 220

62) Ibid, p. 220

63) Ibid, p. 220

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real Nile, and though he had explored the area of Lake Tana, he did not follow the river's course down the Sudan, but made a short-cut from Abyssinia to the Butana plains and to Sennar. All his knowledge about the course of the Blue Nile out of Sennar is hearsay only, as well as his knowledge about the White Nile. Thus, Bruce perceived that the mountains of Fazugli extend uninterrupted to the Wuba mountains. On this assumption he considered that the White Nile was a little tributary to the Main Nile, and had its source in the Fazugli-Wuba chain of mountains. If he erred in geographical points, could it not be possible that he would accordingly err in the relative positions of the various tribes?

Arnell dwelt on the statement of Bruce that the Sennar kings were lawfully killed by a special officer called Sid el Qom, and after the sanction of a special committee formed by the great officials of the kingdom. He tried to link this habit with the Shilluk divine kings, supporting ultimately the theory of the Shilluk origin of the Fung. Moreover, he depended much upon verbal similarities as proofs to his theory, such as Kwom, the Shilluk word for their sacred steel, to be transformed to Qom, in Sid el Qom etc. We have shown clearly that any comparison between the Shilluk king-killing and the alleged Fung killing is false, due to the lack of the essential notion of kings as incarnations of the first Shilluk king.

Crawford, though he does not suggest a Shilluk origin of the Fung, says that there were certain Shilluk associations. He further states: "I suggest that the Shilluk association was not derived directly from the Shilluk region on the White Nile, but indirectly from the Fazugli region and the gabels to the west whose inhabitants were partly at any rate of Shilluk origin. When Amara Dunkas marched down the Blue Nile and founded his kingdom he may have carried with him some of those Shilluk associations..."⁶⁴) Crawford then suggests that the Shilluk migrated to this area from the White Nile region starting from Melut, or Jebel Ahmed Agha, or Bonk. He is compelled to such an explanation because

- 1) he finds that the inhabitants of the Fazugli region are "Negroid, and can hardly therefore have come from the north or east, and in the southeast is the land of the Hamitic Gallas".⁶⁵)
- 2) that "evidence of place names (in both this area and the White Nile area) is here quite conclusive".⁶⁶)

It is quite clear that Crawford does not take into consideration that the whole of the Fazugli area as well as other areas to the north were, in the distant past, a Negro home, which shrank to the present picture of pockets in the river valleys which cut deep in the western escarpment of the Abyssinian plateau,

64) Crawford, p. 156

65) *ibid*, p. 157

66) *ibid*, p. 157.

- 182 -

114 and in the hilly offshoots of the Abyssinian highlands represented
 174 by the Dar Fung mountains. This shrinkage was due to the everlasting
 extension of the Hamitic and other Caucasian racial elements towards
 the south. Secondly, the evidences of similar place names do not
 mean a Shilluk migration alone, because though the Nilotic percentage
 in these tribes' languages did reach about 68%, "further analysis
 directed to determine which Nilotic language had exerted the greatest
 pressure indicated no real distinction ... the percentages being
 Nuer 47%, Shilluk 46%, and Dinka 45%". 67

If the Durun -a tribal group in the Dar Fung area- are
 included within the Nilotic language group, 68) and if there is a
 probability that the Dar Fung tribes are similar in their physical
 attributes to the substratum of the northern Shilluk provinces,
 then there is no wonder to see strong resemblances between both
 areas, and no wonder that many authorities erred in trying to clarify
 this resemblance by a one-sided Shilluk influence extended to Dar Fung.

On the same ground we can refute Westermann's assumption
 that "it is possible that this Shilluk population (the Berta and
 other Dar Fung tribes) in Senhar (probably he means the Fung kingdom)
 came to political influence and took part in the government of
 the state". 69) In reality there is need to assume a Shilluk migration,
 or invasion in this mountainous Dar Fung region, because the Shilluk
 are a riverain tribe, and on account of a common substratum, physical,
 cultural and linguistic in both areas.

8) Conclusions

174 From the foregoing survey it is now clear that there
 648 existed a relationship between the Fung and the Shilluk, but it
 is not a relationship of common origin.

114 The statement of Bruce about the invasion of the Gezira
 174 by the Shilluk is not supported by dates nor by tradition of either
 the Shilluk or the Fung. The only support comes from the Hamag
 elders of Jebel Gule, 70) but Mr. Chataway answers this question
 quite rightly. He states that "The Abu Likailik family, when
 trying to oust the Fung, would be up against an obstacle of strong
 prejudice, seeing that they could not deny their descent from mere
 'abid'. It was then too late to provide a satisfactory niche for
 the Hamag, and the alternative was to say that the Fung were no
 better. Why not say the Fung were Shilluk and tack the suggestion
 on the existing traditions of Shilluk raids? That the Fung were
 black was added evidence, evidence to which Bruce seems to have
 given undue weight". 71)

67) Seligman, p. 422

68) Butt includes the Durun in the Nilotic language group,
 and treats them as such in his book.

69) Westermann, p. LVI.

70) See note No 59)

71) Chataway, p. 117.

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In fact, the tradition of the Shilluk tells us of hostile relations between them and the Fung, and their first encounter, as was stated above, was on a battlefield. It is quite logical that, as the Fung extended their domains across the White Nile to the Nuba mountains and the Kordofan, the Shilluk were also - for a time - incorporated in the Fung domains. 72) We must not exempt the Shilluk from sharing the same fate with other Negro and Negroid neighbouring tribes. Many of the members of these tribes were transplanted to the Sennar area, forming the bulk of the Fung armies. It is recorded that these people gave their old village names to the new villages where they were living in service of the Fung Empire. Shilluk were among the Sennar armies, and Bruce rightly said that Shilluks are the troops of the king. And owing to the extreme aloofness and haughtiness of a Shilluk, it is not possible to explain the existence of Shilluk in the Fung army, or the transplantation of these Shilluk outside their country as an act of free will on the part of the Shilluk, or as free lancers serving the military ambitions of their deadly foe. The Shilluk must have been compelled to such acts under coercive conditions. We must always bear in mind that the Shilluk were facing a better organized enemy, with cavalry, which was totally unknown warfare equipment to the Shilluk. The Shilluk may have been excellent in using their tactics of surprise attacks, and on relatively isolated groups, but should this tactic succeed against organized armies with cavalry?

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Recorded in the Shilluk songs are many pieces describing the frequent Arab slave raids, the havoc they played with the Shilluk, and prayers to the Shilluk former kings and ancestors to help them against the marauders. How could it be possible then to understand the situation arising from the assumption of a Shilluk origin of the Fung, or the statement of Arkell telling us that the governor of El-Ais was ruling the Shilluk relatives on the White Nile? How could it be possible that the Fung would forget their origin and lost their relatives, subduing them to slaves or mercenaries? And if the Fung did not themselves raid the Shilluk on account of alleged blood-relationship, why did they not afford them protection against Arab raids if we knew that the Arab raiders are included in the Fung domain?

The other aspect upon which Arkell leaned was the killing of kings in Sennar, and the resemblance of this habit with that which prevails among the Shilluk. But we have invalidated this statement upon qualitative grounds.

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If kings of Sennar were killed lawfully by a royal executioner, which in itself is not a fact agreed upon, they were killed on a totally different basis from that which was practiced among the Shilluk. Furthermore, we know that Shilluk kings were either suffocated, or clubbed to death, but with the Fung, a king

72) Arkell, (B), p. 17. He states that "The Fung Kingdom at its prime included most of the present Sudan, from Hannele in the north to Beni Shangul and the Shilluk country in the south ..."

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174 was killed by cutting off his head with a SWORD, any other weapon
643 being a violation of custom. Tremaux writes that "... une épée,
[417] seul instrument légal en pareil cas (tue un roi)". 73) This is
another qualitative difference between the Shilluk and the Fung,
because we know that the Shilluk never use or used swords as weapons.

Now the information Bruce was furnished with came mostly
114 from Ashmet Sid el Gom, the alleged regicide of Sennar. This man
643 is from Fasugli, and as we always have to be cautious with Bruce's
statements, we do not know exactly whether Ashmet Sid el Gom spoke
about the custom of king killing as it was in the past in his
country of birth. Professor Arad and Mr. Chatavay are also of this
opinion. What supports such an idea is what Fraser says about the
ceremonial killing of the Fasugli kings. Fraser writes: "In some
tribes of Fasogl the king had to administer justice daily under
a certain tree. If because of sickness or any other cause he was
unable to discharge this duty for three whole days, he was hanged
on the tree in a noose, which contained two razors so arranged
that when the noose was drawn tight by the weight of the king's
body, they cut his throat". 74) Seligman also quotes three instances
from Fraser about the killing of the king at Fasugli. 75)

171 King killing is a widely spread custom in Africa, and to
643 try to cope with it is outside the scope of this paper. But in the
Nile Valley, we have instances of the existence of the custom in
Meroe, when king Ergamenes cut the throats of the priests instead
of letting them kill him. We also have a story collected by
Frobenius in Kordofan about the custom of king killing, and how
one king was able to avoid his fate; and henceforth, the custom
was abandoned. 76 This custom is in practice, or now in dormant
form, among the Shilluk, the Burun and many other tribes of Dar Fung.
It was alleged to be in existence among the Sennar kings, and was
also alleged to have been the custom of the Abdullah Arabs, who
were the viceroys of the Fung kings in the North. 77) If thus the
custom was widely spread in the Nile Valley, there is no point in
alleging that the custom in Sennar was brought by the Shilluk,
because it is now clear that the origin of such a custom is to be
sought after in the deep past of the cultures and civilizations
that were planted, or originated in the Nile Valley.

114 There is no doubt that the Dar Fung tribes, as well as
171 the Maba of southern Kordofan, represent the older substratum of
174 the whole of the central and southern Sudan. This is judged by
643 their isolation, the poverty of their present lands - which are
174 merely rocky hills- the different languages and cultures etc.

73) Tremaux, p. 199

74) Fraser, p. 266

75) Seligman, p. 425

76) Frobenius, L., Chapter I.

77) H.A. MacMichael, in his "History of the Arabs in the Sudan",
Cambridge 1922, quoted by Seligman, p. 426.

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Strong new invasions from the north always swept the plains, and compelled the older cultures with their practitioners to seek refuge areas. But it is not expected that the whole of the older population will seek new homes; many will stay and, after a time, when the new-comers have forgotten their former superiority and pride, both components will mingle, to a certain extent, freely with each other. After that it is expected that there will be a free reciprocal exchange of cultural elements, modified to the new conditions.

On the basis of such theory, can we explain the fact that it was only in the reign of King Dakin, number 5 in the list of Sennar, and in the reign of King Tugo, number 10 in the Shilluk list, that coronation ceremonies were introduced in each kingdom separately? It would be highly probable to justify such an assumption if we remember that the Fung were incorporating part of the older population, namely the Hamar, into their kingdom, and that the northern part of the Shillukland at least belongs to this old stratum of peoples.

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173 and Dimo quarrelled because the latter insisted on Nyikang's child being dissected to recover a valuable bead it had swallowed. Nyikang consequently again migrated. With a following of only six families he sailed down the Bahr el Ghazal¹ and landed some twenty miles west of Tonga at the site of the present village of Acietagwok.

The party advanced eastwards along the left bank to Nyilual where Nyikang made his headquarters. The country west of the site of Malakal was then uninhabited but they found the Anuak near the Sobat Mouth. It was agreed that the Shilluk should confine themselves to the west bank of the Nile and leave the Anuak in possession of the Sobat and the east bank. There was then no sign of the Nuer on the Zeraf Island.

Nyikang made his headquarters at Nyilwal and built his own village at Dedigo.² Since his son Dak made his village nearby at Falo it would appear that several decades passed before the Shilluk attempted to occupy country to the north of the Sobat Mouth. When they did so they were defeated, in a battle fought near the present village of Wau, by a red people, then in possession, whom the Shilluk describe as *Fun*³.

Exactly who these *Fun* were is uncertain, as also is the correctness of the Shilluk tradition that after much fighting they were expelled from their last stronghold at Demoth⁴ and driven over the river into the Maban country north-east of Melut. It seems more probable, in view of the smallness of Nyikang's party, that they came into contact and fought with an outlying colony of the Fung Kingdom, some of whom withdrew north-eastwards while the remnant fused with the immigrants and came in time to call themselves *Collo* too. At the same time the *Collo* army seems to have been reinforced by the enlistment of drafts of blacks, probably Nuba, who were called, somewhat contemptuously and to distinguish them from the *Collo* and the *Fun*

[114] 1. On the basis of reckoning 13 years to a reign and allowing about thirty to a generation the date of Nyikang's arrival can be estimated at about 1530. Hofmayr (Die Shilluk) however thinks that Ocalo was the first non-legendary king and estimates his date, on the same system of reckoning, at about 1600-1630.

2. In the settlement of Fanyidwai Pac.

3. In the course of this battle the Sacred Stool of Nyikang was captured, and the Shilluk say that this stool *Kuom* is still in the *Fun* country.

[115] 4. A village some 25 miles north of Kodok where traces of earthworks can still be seen.

[561] Leadership in war however, is, dependent upon the collective vote
 182 of the age-sets, and this perhaps provides a clue to the origin and former
 701 purpose of the settlement; namely the necessity of alliance under the
 726 threat of war. The local kinship group, split-off from the main branch
 621 of the clan is not a sufficiently powerful body to defend itself against
 [613] attack. So lineages, resident in the same part of the country, join
 together and possibly link themselves to some numerically superior
 group. Mutual protection is thus made possible. The strongest
 561 lineage of the group later assumes political authority and a chief is
 701 chosen from its members, but for the purpose which the alliance was
 originally made, the warriors range themselves in ranks where kinship
 counts for nothing. A war-leader is elected and not necessarily from
 the dominant lineage. This is not, of course, the origin of the age-set
 182 system, but it may account for the form it has taken among the Shilluk.
 561 Latterly, when large-scale warfare is comparatively rare, the original
 721 purpose of the alliance is disappearing and with it the motive for
 the age-set system. A period of proximity, common political and
 621 economic interests, however, have caused the separate lineages to
 regard themselves united by social ties and patterns of behaviour
 more lasting than those raised by a temporary alliance. The settlement
 thus becomes an integral unit of the social body.

9. The larger territorial divisions of the tribe, the *Luel*, which are described in
 Mr. Pamphrey's article, originated in the same way as the settlements. The inhabitants
 of each division made a temporary pact when a common cause arose. It is therefore
 likely that age-sets in the past covered a larger section of the population than they do to-
 day when each age-set is confined to the inhabitants of one settlement. The Shilluk are
 reticent when questioned on the subject and further investigation is necessary before a
 full account of the age-set system among the Shilluk can be recorded.

INSTALLATION OF A RETH

29

The electoral college, in whom rests the responsibility for electing a new *reth*, is a very conscious survival of the traditional structure of the Shilluk tribe, and we believe it to be composed of those who are the descendants of the men who were, at any rate traditionally, the lords-lieutenant of the various counties into which Nyikang divided his kingdom, with the inclusion of three representatives from the large royal clan. 643 666 [174]

Shilluk society is divided into four main classes, the Kwareth, Colo, Ororo, and Bang Reth, two of whom the Kwareth and Colo together represent by far the greater part of the tribe and together provide the electoral college. The Ororo and Bang Reth have very important ceremonial functions in the installing of the *reth*, but no say in his election. As has been explained in the introduction the Kwareth "class" are really an extended clan, they are the descendants of the royal house, and they all trace their ancestry back to a *xyireth* and through him and his father directly back to Nyikang. The Colo are the mass of the Shilluk people divided into many clans, who may trace their origin to a family ancestor who "came with Nyikang" to what is now Shilluk country, or claim to be pre-Shilluk inhabitants of the country, or some of those non-Shilluk accretions, which Nyikang collected to him as he pursued his conquests. 565 666 [614] 644

Nyikang settled the west bank of the White Nile, from "Tonga to Mwomo," (the traditional boundary in the north is Moro some four miles north of the river port at Kaka, and in the south at Fafajo about ten miles upstream of Tonga). As he went he parcelled out the country among his followers, and made eleven of them chiefs¹⁰ of the first degree, answerable to him and looking to him for their appointment and authority. When the organization became complete the lords of the marches of Tonga and Mwomo became even more important than the others by virtue of their duties in connexion with the defence of the Shilluk boundaries and their distance from Fashoda. But although these two were the most important on the executive side of 173 631

10. They were all Colo. Kwareth, who are descended from sons of *reths*, did not, of course, exist in Nyikang's day, for he was the first *reth*.

175 had nothing to do except to warn the Shilluk that a *reth* chosen by
643 violence would not be accepted by government.
649

During the interval between the death of a *reth* and the final
643 installation of a successor the Shilluk lack, in a certain degree, their
chief mediator with Nyikang and God, and the *reth*-elect lacks certain
attributes of divinity, which are bestowed upon him later by Nyikang.
Both parties express this inadequacy by certain prohibitions on their
behaviour, many of which, in the case of the *reth* at any rate, are not
signs of mourning but signs of respect to Nyikang, as they endure
till his installation, and do not in all cases cease with the wake of the
deceased. It is forbidden for Shilluk to light grass fires (except perhaps
[688] along the drying marshes, by the river banks) between the death of
one *reth* and the installation of his successor. Any offender is liable
to a fine. There are two types of building among the Shilluk; walls
341 are built from mud alone laid in circular layers, or else a framework
643 of millet stalks is first erected and then packed with mud outside
and in. The latter technique is regarded as inferior; the former is
the royal or divine style of building. Fashoda is built like that, and
all the shrines to Nyikang, *reths* and *ryireths* throughout the country.
[174] Men of substance also build their houses after this fashion, and it
seems as if this may have been the original traditional form of Shilluk
building, and the other form is looked upon as something foreign.
This royal style of building is forbidden in the same way as the burning
of grass. It is said that the prohibition upon this royal style of build-
ing is a sign of respect to Nyikang: "you must not build in Nyikang's
style, while Nyikang's houses are down". Nyikang's houses are not
[778] actually thrown down, except the great shrine of Fanyikang, but
[346] each shrine of Nyikang is rebuilt by each new *reth*, or should be; and
there is a general feeling that there is a rebirth of the whole Nyikang
tradition at the installation of a *reth*. During the period of the
interregnum there is a general feeling that something has passed away
from the Shilluk, and requires renewing by Nyikang's reappearance,
and until Nyikang himself has come to renew his contact with the
Shilluk the people mark the interval by abstaining from building in
the way they associate with Nyikang. Building of the inferior style

NOTES

THE MAR OF THE SHILLUK

By A. PAUL

Deputy Governor, Kassala Province

IT is related in Shilluk legend that when Nyidwai, the sister of Nyikang, 173
the divine founder of the Shilluk royal line, married a chief of the Nuba 778
the bridegroom presented Nyikang with a silver engraved stool and a
mysterious object of great supernatural powers known as the *Mar*.

It has been described variously as a crystal, as a stone having form but no weight, and as a pot containing magic water, but as it is some two hundred and fifty years since it was last seen, accurate description is hardly to be expected.

So long as the *Mar* was in Shilluk hands the tribe was great and powerful: cattle increased, there was always enough to eat, and the tribe was invincible in war. In the reign of *Reth* Dokot (A.D. 1670-90), however, even the warrior Shilluk had had their fill of battle and bloodshed, so that they finally refused to accompany that warlike but uneven-tempered ruler on yet another expedition against their neighbours, complaining with reason that his continual campaigns allowed them no time to gather in their harvests and look after their families.

This so incensed the *Reth* that in a fit of pique he threw the *Mar* into the Nile, whence it has never been recovered. The Shilluk like to consider that with it went the luck of the tribe, and that they have never been happy or prosperous since. [777]

The object of this note is to suggest that the *Mar* may in fact have been an emerald, a peridot, an olivine, or some such similar stone. 174
Up to the beginning of the sixteenth century, when Pizarro conquered Peru, the only emerald mines known to the world were those in the eastern deserts of Egypt and the Sudan, the most famous being that at J. Zabara, near the coast not far north of the ancient port of Bernice.

Quatremere, quoting from Masudi's description of the mines in *Muruj al Dhahab*, states that the emeralds mined there were of four qualities.¹ The poorest quality, known as *Asam*, was brittle, of bad colour, and little value. A less inferior type was traded in Egyptian markets to buyers from the west, and yet finer stones, called *Al Bahri*, were much in demand by the "Kings of the Sea," from Hindustan, China and the Hadramaut. The finest specimens

¹ *Memoires Geographiques et Historiques sur l'Egypte*. See also Floyer: *Etudes sur le Nord Etbai*.

174 of all, pure in colour, of great brilliancy, without flaw or blemish, were but rarely found, and for that reason most highly treasured. They were called *Mar*.

The paths of comparative philology, as pointed out in Vol. XXI, Part I, of this journal, abound in pitfalls for the credulous and unwary, nevertheless, it is tempting to suppose that the luck of the Shilluk, of which *Rest Dohot* so inconsiderately deprived them, was in fact a comparatively rare type of emerald from the Red Sea hills.

832 of mud, assume enormous proportions, becoming rather like
302 the wide ears of an elephant. When they become too cumbersome he tires of them and has them cut off; he may then adopt another style, but as a rule the fires of youth have by this died down and he is content to leave his hair in its natural state.

302 Other highly esteemed hair-styles are the 'Cherry Pie', when the hair all over the head is moulded tightly into little red balls; the 'Cock's Comb' extending in a raised ridge from the crown of the head to the forehead while the rest is shaven, and the 'Hat Brush'. One day my houseboy appeared before my startled eyes with his head clean shaven save for a long elliptical patch of hair which he had dyed (with, I suspected, the Sisters' laundry blue) a brilliant blue colour. Again, a brave will sometimes scorn all such fripperies, and shave his head completely, polish it with oil and bind a string of flat blue beads around his forehead, achieving the effect of a decorated chocolate Easter egg.

562 As is usual in the East it is the male who wears the fine plumage while the female is subdued, if not indeed drab, in her colouring. A Shilluk girl makes no attempt to imitate the gorgeous decoration of her brother; her dirty grey cloth
[291] she may hem with an embroidered pattern in beads, and she
[531] may bedeck also with coloured beads the little apron she wears around her waist, but apart from a string of beads
[301] around her neck or arm and an iron or copper bangle, that is the only finery she will allow herself. She rarely paints
[302] her face or dresses her hair. On the occasion of a dance
[292] she will change her everyday cloth for a blue one or a mantle of deer skin, anoint her shaven head with oil and trick herself out with a few more beads, and having gone as far as fashion allows will rely upon personal charm to win her admirers.

174 The origins of the Shilluk people are not known with any
[197] degree of certainty. It would seem from their affinity, especially in language, with the Jur tribe of the Southern Sudan and with the Luo of the Bahr-el-Gazal and Kenya

The People and their Origin

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that they once formed part of a great tribe which had its home in the district north-east of the Great Lakes of Uganda. This theory is supported by their tribal lore which says that long ago (the time is computed to be about the second half of the sixteenth century) their people came from far away, a locality indicated by a vague wave of the arm in the general direction of Uganda, and moved up into the Sudan. They did not take the direct line of the Nile as their route because of the vast swamps which lie between the southernmost part of the Sudan and the present Shilluk country, but turned north-west and made their first settlement in the region now known as the Bahr-el-Gazal. Of their leaders two are especially remembered: Nyikang and his nephew, Dimo. Nyikang seems to have been a mild and peace-loving gentleman, and Dimo truculent and quarrelsome. Tired of constant bickering, Nyikang gathered a few followers and, leaving Dimo in undisputed possession of the territory they then had, he followed the course of the Bahr-el-Gazal until, having left the great swamps behind him, he moved into the region of the present Shilluk country. He little thought that in leaving the fertile land of the Bahr-el-Gazal to seek peace for himself and his followers, he was not leading them into that plenty which is so often the handmaid of peace, but was condemning them and their descendants to hardship and want, to disease and hunger. Yet that is what happened. Weary of being constantly halted by the swamps, he seized upon the first sizeable stretch of country north of the swamp area, and there the migration came to rest. Tradition says that when he arrived at the entrance to this Promised Land, Nyikang lay down gratefully in the shade of a tree and uttered a fervent thanks to God; this incident has given its name to a village founded on that historic spot; Papwojo, the Village of Thanksgiving. 174
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The travellers soon found that their new home was no land flowing with milk and honey; it was hard and inhospitable, scorched in the dry season and flooded in the wet, scarcely able to provide a living for man and beast, yet with it they had to be content, for further progress was barred to them.

173 To the west and north was the desert inhabited by peoples
 174 greater and stronger than themselves and prepared to dis-
 pute their advance in that direction; on the east the Nile
 ran, and behind them were the swamplands, and Dimo.

131 They had no choice then but to stay in the country where
 361 they are found today, a narrow belt of land extending
 from Tonga in the south to Kaka in the north, a distance of
 about 150 miles. Inland Shilluk settlements may be found
 15 miles away from the river, but generally their villages,
 containing from two to twenty or thirty families, stand no
 further than a mile or two from its banks, straggling along
 the whole length of the country. Since their first settling
 there some hardy souls have crossed the Nile and found a
 foothold on its eastern bank which they have gradually ex-
 tended until they occupy a strip of land stretching from
 opposite Kodok in the north to the River Sobat in the south,
 and along that river for a distance of 30 miles or so. The
 nature of the country on the other side, however, does not
 differ from that of their original settlement, and the powerful
 Dinka tribe has always opposed their progress inland, so
 that those who have gone to live on the eastern bank are no
 better off than they were before.

565 The social structure of the Shilluk tribe is built up from a
 division of the people into four classes or castes. These classes
 are not however exclusive, for they live together in the same
 villages, share common tasks and recreations and even
 intermarry. The basis of the division is the possession of
 royal blood, or, ultimately, descent from Nyikang.

565 The first class is that of the Kwareth, the Royal Clan. To
 644 this belong all those who are members of the royal houses
 tracing their ancestry directly to Nyikang. Only a member
 of this class is eligible for election as king. The first four
 generations of a king's descendants are recognized as being
 of royal blood and are entitled to the privileges of royalty.

[304] Thus they are permitted to retain all their teeth, they may
 [301] wear an anklet of small white beads, and more than one
 [292] according to the nearness of descent; they alone may dress
 in a leopard skin for a dance.